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REFLECTIONS  
ON THE  
PREROGATIVES,  
POWER AND PROTECTION  
OF  
SAINT JOSEPH, K  
SPOUSE OF THE B. VIRGIN MARY;  
WITH  
SEVERAL DEVOTIONS  
To the said most glorious PATRIARCH.

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*He who is the Keeper of his Lord shall be glorified.*  
Prov. xxvii. 18.

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THE  
PREROGATIVES, POWER AND  
PROTECTION  
OF  
ST. JOSEPH.

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CHAP. I.—*Of the Dignity and Glory  
of St. Joseph.*

NEVER did any person, of what rank soever, claim with greater justice the sublime encomium, *Her Husband is noble*, Prov xxxi. 23, than the Virgin Spouse of *Mary*. He was most noble by his birth, noble for his merits, noble in his station. The miscalled Grandees of the world too frequently raise themselves by rapine and blood, on the ruins of oppressed innocency; they aggrandize themselves, standing above the vulgar,

upon a high pedestal of riches and titles, which to the moral philosopher, Seneca, (Epist. 41 ) appeared no greater a wonder, than to admire a pigmy upon a mountain; bring him down, and the dwarf is matter of mirth. In like manner, divest those who are adored, of what so highly recommends them, and they may be in the lamentable circumstances of trampled on *Sejanus*, or starved *Belisarius*. The mighty Conqueror of Asia, *Alexander* styled the *Great*, made a blaze, *the earth was silent in his fight*, 2 Machab. i. 3.; he pushed on his conquests to the extremity of the earth, and slaying kings and princes, he vanished upon the sudden, little remaining of his memory, except the invading others dominions, and generous answers, kind historians allow him, in entertaining friends or enemies.

There is a noble sort of *grandeur*, viz. *Virtue*, which raises a man above the level of others, and places mortals above the stars. Seneca, Epist. 83. This looks on earth with disdain, and

aspires to be called *great in the kingdom of heaven*. St. Mat. v. 19. St. Joseph was favoured with all requisites, to render him thus truly *great*. By birth he was a prince lineally descending from the renowned kings of the written law; he had in his veins the purest blood of ancient Patriarchs and Prophets. The Evangelist brings down his pedigree from great Abraham, and the angel salutes him with the royal title, *Son of David*. St. Mat. i. 20. Not to dwell upon this unparalleled extraction, he had the same progenitors as the Son of God made man, and the several promises of God to the house of David, 2 Kings 7. 3 Kings 9. Psal. 88 and 131, of the expected Messias to be born of his race, and to be called *King of the Jews*, (as he was styled in the grot of Bethlehem), St. Mat. ii. 2, devolved to our Redeemer from St. Joseph.

It would be reviving the blasphemous heresy of stigmatized Cerinthus, to assert that Jesus was by nature the real Son of Joseph, yet he must be looked on as his legitimate parent,

and entitled in all things to the right of paternity, except that of generation, *Damascen. Orat. de Nativ. B. V.* which according to Rupertus Abbas, *Rupert. in 1 Math.* the eternal Father supplied, by infusing into the husband of Mary, a paternal love for her Son Jesus. *Rupert. ibid.* A child lawfully conceived in matrimony, may strictly call the husband father, which title the Holy Ghost honours St. Joseph with, by the mouth of the immaculate Virgin in her blessed Son's presence: *Your father and I have sought you sorrowing*, St. Luke ii. 48. Children reputed by common fame to belong to such a parent, or those who are adopted, have a right to inherit titles and patrimonies; much more Jesus who was born of Mary, Joseph's wife; for according to the approved axiom of the law, *Whatever grows in, or is built upon another's soil, belongs to the owner thereof*, *Instit. de Rer. Divis.*; nor doth it invalidate what is here offered, that Jesus was the supernatural fruit of virginity; for a corn growing miraculously in a field, belongs to the

owner of the soil. In like manner Mary was the real mother of Jesus, miraculously begotten and miraculously born, and Joseph by matrimonial right may term him Son, because born of his wife's body. The sceptre of Juda, usurped by invading and intruding Herod, came to Joseph by hereditary succession, and consequently to Christ, verifying what the Archangel foretold, St. Luke i. 32. *The Lord will give him the seat of David his father.* Fervorous contemplatives may address St. Joseph, with the admiring expression of old Tobias to the Archangel Raphael, *You are come of a noble race!* Tob. v. 19. What is yet more glorious, St. Joseph had the honour to call him Son upon earth, whom the first person of the adorable Trinity has owned from all eternity his begotten Son.

When the Almighty deputed Moses to bring his chosen people out of Egyptian slavery, and to humble and confound the tyrannising monarch, he favoured the Thaumaturgus with the glorious title, *I have appointed thee*

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*the God of Pharoah, Exod. vii. 1.; that is, by eminent power \* to terrify him with afflicting prodigies. After a more indulgent manner, he might be called the God of the Hebrews, protecting, conducting, governing and supporting them†. By the same rule, what may not be said of the grand Patriarch St. Joseph, who conducted, protected, governed and supported the God of Moses? He, out of all the tribe of Juda, was selected, as a consort and comfort to the Mother of Christ, the most faithful and sole coadjutor to Jesus in his great council upon earth‡. If he who receives a prophet, in the name of a prophet, shall have the reward of a prophet§; he who with toil and sweat entertained God made Man, shall not he have a reward proportioned to the greatness of his guest? His daily actions in serving Christ, related to the order of hypostatical union, and therefore*

\* Cornel. a Lap. hic.

† Idem ibid.

‡ S. Bernard, hom. 2. Super Missus est.

§ S. Mat. x. 41.



were more divine\*. Can any thing be more astonishing, and at the same time more delightful, than a reflection how Joseph walked with Jesus in one hand, and Mary in the other, both being committed by heaven to his care and conduct.

The Omnipotent, who with lightning, thunder, and dreadful sound of trumpet, proclaimed a strict command; *Honour thy father and mother*, (Exod. xxiii. 12.), doubtless, was the most exact observer of it, and consequently respected St. Joseph, next to his virgin Mother. The deference of provoked Coriolanus to his mother Volumnia, (Val. Max. l. 5. c. 4.) and the tenderness of Æneas to his father Anchises, are but faint resemblances of Jesus's love to Joseph. He who

\* A Lapidè in 1 Matth.

Quædam ministeria præcise pertinent ad ordinem gratiæ gratum facientis, & in hoc, supernum fastigium tenet Apostoli, &c. alia vero sunt ministeria, quæ attingunt ordinem unionis hypostatice, qui ex suo genere perfectior est, ut pater de maternitate Dei in B. Virgine, & in hoc ordine est ministerium S. Josephi. Suarez, 3. Quest. 29. Disput. Sect. 1, 8.

said, long before the incarnation, *I am God and not man*, (Osee xi. 9.) honoured him with divine affection. A dutiful child never loved so intensely. He loved him as a vigilant preserver of his life, withdrawing him from the bloody hand of persecuting Herod. If Mardochæus for detecting the conspiracy of Bagathan and Thares, against King Assueres, deserved to have that dutiful performance transmitted to posterity by imperial annals, (*Esth.* ii. 21.) to be cloathed with royal robes, and a princely diadem set on his head, the first prince of the court to lead his horse, through the large streets of populous Susa, and to proclaim; so *the man is to be honoured*, (*ibid.* c. vi. 8, 9.) *whom the King is pleased to honour*; what preferment, what marks of esteem and glory, is due to our great Patriarch the guardian and governor of the King of Kings, Jesus Christ, who supported him in his minority, and, with many a fatiguing day's work, took pains, that the Son of God should not be necessitated to pass from door to door

begging subsistence? All the noble precedents, of grateful return to favours, recorded by Plutarch, Titus Livius, Val. Maximus, and other authors, whether sacred or profane, are insignificant and useless, to express Jesus's love to Joseph. Hear our blessed Redeemer's own words in a revelation approved by the Eastern Church, and recited by Isidorus out of grave authors: *I conversed, said Christ, with Joseph, as if I had been his son, he commanded me and I obeyed him; I loved him as my father, and even as the apple of my eye.* So was he honoured, whom the great God of Assuerus was pleased to honour: the Omnipotent Creator obeyed the voice of man. *Jos. x. 14.*

The Apostles took it as a special favour, to eat at the same table with their Messias and Master, and certainly it was so: the penitent Magdalen dissolved into tears of love at the kissing his sacred feet, her soul overflowing with heavenly delights: St. John Evangelist leaning on his divine breast seemed to have a fore-

taste of the sweets of Paradise: and yet what is all this, compared to the privileges St. Joseph enjoyed, not for a short time, but conversed familiarly with him, for the long space of near thirty years? The little Jesus in his infancy leaned daily on his father's breast, and whilst the Patriarch humbly caressed him, it is no vain imagination to represent to ourselves the divine babe stretching forth his sacred arms, casting them about his neck and saluting him. Oh! the unspeakable joy, which then replenished the heart of this blessed Saint! especially at such times as deputed choirs of angels sung in the little house of Nazareth the glory of their great God there present in St. Joseph's arms. This happened frequently, as the blessed Virgin revealed to St. Bridgit in the following words: *St. Joseph often beheld an admirable glory, in the midst of which my Son appeared in great splendor, and at the same time heavenly music delighted our hearts, the angels declaring and singing the glory of my Son.* St. Bridg. lib. 6. Rev. c. 58.

St. Joseph kissing a thousand times the sacred feet of his Saviour, seemed continually on Mount Thabor, and had the greatest reason to congratulate with himself, and say to Jesus: *Lord, it is good for us to be here.* St. Mat. xvii. 4. The hidden life of Jesus of Nazareth, is a subject, not for discourse but contemplation.

The merciful decree having passed to redeem prevaricating mankind, the Son of God singled out the ever immaculate Virgin Mary to be his mother, whom the eternal Father adopted as his daughter. A *consort* was to be found, a *helper like to herself*, (Gen. ii. 18.) and for many important reasons. That she might not be stoned to death for an adulteress; that her pedigree might be derived from her husband's; that she might have a support and comforter. St. Ignatius M. adds a fourth, (Apud S. Hieron. in 1 Math.), that the miraculous conception of Christ *might be concealed from the Devil*. But seeing that *man is head of the woman, as Christ is head of the Church, —and as the Church is subject to Christ,*

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*so also women in all things to their husbands.* Ad Ephes. v. 23, 24. Who was so qualified as St. Joseph to command her whom the highest Seraphim would take it as an honour to obey? She to receive submissively a husband's orders, and to move immediately at his first beck; hear and admire! The most blessed Trinity, out of the numerous tribe of Juda, made choice of the Heir to the crown and sceptre of David, (Rupertus Corn. a Lapide in 1 Math.), possibly not because he was so, but for that he was *just*, St. Mat. i. 19.; which word is comprehensive, and includes, *a perfect possession of all virtues.* St. Hieron. in 1 Math. If men of the world could have appointed their parents, they would have had them so polished in every respect, that the most inventive thought could not describe persons of greater perfection both as to mind and body; the power of God could make the spouse of Mary preferable in virtues to all other men, and to surmise his goodness has not favoured him, is to rank divine affection beneath our own.



We cannot be too tender and cautious in the least seeming comparison, relating to the blessed Virgin with St. Joseph. She is like the radiant sun; in her presence stars of the first magnitude disappear. She alone gave a body to redeem the world; *for the flesh of Christ is the flesh of Mary.* St. Augustine, Serm. de Assump. The omnipotency of God *cannot create a greater mother.* St. Bonav. l. 2. in spec. B. M. S. She had a clear knowledge of all her eminent dignity; that she was not only sovereign Queen of all Saints and Angels, but the true and real Mother of God. And in this respect St. Joseph was much her inferior, yet the love and respect she had for her dear Spouse, caused her to set aside her prerogatives, and, as one under obedience, to render him all manner of service and honour imaginable. Jesus was her God, and she called Joseph her Lord, (*Bridg. 7. Rev. c. 25.*), speaking to him and of him with profound respect and esteem, as if he had been more deserving than herself. Never was any Virgin Lady

so faithfully loving, so chasteely behaved, so religiously engaging in conversation, with her noble Spouse. She loved him tenderly, as the zealous protector of her consecrated virginity, as the preserver of her unspotted honour, against any surmise or reproach, concerning her virginal child birth: she respected him as head and husband, as one of the greatest merit of all mankind, next to her Son Jesus; therefore she chearfully condescended to the meanest services, whereby she could express her humble duty. O prerogative, not to be sufficiently set forth by an Angel! If the astonished St. Elizabeth was fixed in admiration, and with a loud voice cried out, *whence is this to me, that the Mother of my Lord should come to me,* (St. Luke i. 43.), how ought we to extol his dignity, whom the same Mother of God served and obeyed thirty long years? The devout clients may take full notice, how in honouring St. Joseph they join with the ever blessed Virgin, in her former frequent performances.

We are not to discourse of St. Joseph in the same dialect, as when we mention other saints. The Eternal Truth indeed has declared, *that among the born of women, none has risen greater than John the Baptist*, St. Mat. xi. 11; which, at first sight, seems to postpone the blessed Virgin. St. Luke explicates the foregoing words: *There has not arose a greater prophet*. St. Luke vii. 28. Hence St. Ambrose and St. Hilarins observe, that the Baptist is not styled greatest absolutely but relatively to the Prophets of the Old Testament. He is not compared to the blessed Virgin, St. Joseph, or the Apostles, *who following Christ by reason of their apostolical dignity, were not less, perchance greater than John*. Corn. a Lap. in Math. 11. Be it how it will, in respect of the first evangelical promulgers of Christianity, *that prudent and faithful servant whom our Lord constituted over his family to provide food in due time*, (St. Mat. xxiv. 45.), in all equity seems excepted from the general rule. Let it be spoken with all imaginable

deference to St. John, the zealous priest, undaunted prophet, and glorious martyr, there appears a vast distance betwixt a parent and a precursor. The blessed Virgin Mary, as *Mother of God*, has a certain infinite dignity, (St. Thom. 1. p. q. 25.); next to her the greatest degree of honour seems St. Joseph's right, *by as much as he was raised to higher dignity above others.* St. Thom. 3. p. What St. Matthew sets down; *Mary, of whom Jesus was born*, is, to contemplatives, a complete eulogium of all her praises. St. John Damascene makes the same inference as to St. Joseph, *for calling him the husband of Mary, the title is ineffable*, (Con. 3. in Nat. B. Maria), *and nothing more glorious can be said of him.*

St. Joseph's personal services to God made man, and those of the blessed Virgin, are of a far higher rank, than what was performed by others.

He laboured, he toiled, that our blessed Redeemer might be supported and supplied in all human necessities: so that at the last dreadful day, when

the wicked men will wither away with fear, (St. Luke xi. 26.), whilst happy souls will be admiring the goodness of the immortal Judge, for taking notice of their small duties in relieving him, in the persons of his *little ones*, as not knowing well how to understand the superlative favour, they will enquire, Lord! when did we see you *hungry, naked, or a stranger*, (St. Mat. xxv. 34, 35.), at that time our great Patriarch may receive public honours before the congregated universe; for whereas our merciful Saviour will say to the lowest saved souls, *Come ye blessed of my Father, &c.* the charming and glorious acknowledgment may be literally applied to St. Joseph after this manner: *Come my blessed Father, take possession of a kingdom prepared for you from the beginning of the world; for I, who sit on this throne, was hungry, and you gave me to eat; thirstily, and you gave me to drink; a stranger, and you entertained me for thirty years in Egypt and Palestine.* If St. Martin, when a catechumen, deserved to see Christ,

bearing on his sacred shoulders part of the cloak he had bestowed upon an indigent creature, (*in vita St. Martin*), we cannot comprehend the honours reserved by the great and good God, who with sound of trumpet may proclaim: I was naked from head to foot, and Joseph here present clothed me, he frequently divested himself of his own garments, to secure me from shivering in freezing blasts

The mellifluous doctor of Claravallis makes a sort of a parallel betwixt Joseph the son of Jacob, governor of Egypt, (*St. Bernard, hom. 2 in Missus est*), and Joseph, governor of Christ. The second has stricter right to the encomiums of the first, attributed to him in sacred writ. *No man on the earth*, says Ecclesiasticus, Eccles. xlv. 17, *was like to him, was a man born the prince of his brethren, the stay of the nation, a prop of his people:* the Egyptian monarch took the ring from his own finger and gave it into Joseph's hand, ordering him to mount the *second chariot*, (*Gen. iv.*), commanding



all to bow the knee before him, and a crier to proclaim, that he was governor over the whole land of Egypt, the throne only distinguishing him from Pharoah, who said of him, that he was *full of the Spirit of God.* Gen. xlii. The application is obvious. The Spouse of the blessed Virgin was a prince chosen by the Almighty to be the ruler and support of the sacred family; he was honoured with the most glorious wedding ring, as husband to the Mother of Jesus, in all probability having the second seat in heaven, next to his virgin Spouse. He was the protector of his Saviour, and by consequence *full of the Spirit of God*; for, doubtless, the Holy Ghost co-operating so immediately to the incarnation, descended upon him as he did upon the apostles, as far as was expedient to discharge his incumbent duty, blessing him with angelical purity, singular prudence, heroic fortitude, unlimited patience, unshaken constancy, profound humility, seraphical love of God, and intense affection for his immaculate Spouse, as also

such other virtues as seemed due to him, who was deputed not to prevent famine in Egypt, but to preserve the *Bread coming down from heaven*, (1 Joan. vi.), which was to redeem mankind, and nourish the faithful, in the blessed sacrament of the altar, rendering them happy in paradise by the beatifical vision of himself, and the other two adorable persons of the most sacred Trinity.

From what has been already offered, may connaturally be inferred, that *it is not temerarious nor improbable, but rather pious and very likely to be of opinion, that St. Joseph excels all other saints, except the blessed Virgin, in grace and glory.* Suarez, p. 3. t. 2. Disput. 8, &c. None can dispute precedence of coronation with the royal consort of the Mother of God. Marcianus, a servant and subject, became emperor upon the marriage with Pulcheria, they both living virgins; and it would be a defect in judgment, as well as in devotion, to entertain a thought that others go before the Favourite of Heaven. The consulting

sedate reason and common sense lays demonstration in our way, that lower subjects gives place to him, who was the object of Jesus's and Mary's ardent affections: so that the dream of Joseph in Canaan is verified also in our glorious Patriarch, *the stars adore him*, Gen. xxxix. 7.; that is to say, all blessed spirits reverence him, as was revealed to St. Gertrude on the Vigil of the Annunciation of the blessed Virgin, to whom heaven was laid open, and when the choir sung St. Joseph's praises, or the priest at the altar named him, the saints bowed their heads, (*in vita St. Gertrude*) shewing signs of joy, and congratulation, for the honours done him upon earth. Wherefore as the worship of Latria is offered solely to God, Hyperdulia to the blessed Virgin, the highest Dulia belongs to St. Joseph.

Before I close this chapter, I cannot forbear remarking how unjust the common pencils are to our Patriarch, that (I know not on what account) represent him, both as to age and features, not becoming the foster-father

of Jesus, and spouse of Mary. In all probability the Son of God would not provide a husband to his beloved Mother, who had the least personal defect; and although he might be forty when the blessed Virgin was fourteen, yet he ought not to be exposed, as leaning on a staff, and so decript as to be almost useless, when he was vigorous and able to work thirty years in serving the sacred family at home and abroad. St. Bernard is of opinion, that *St. Joseph was the likeness of Mary*; and the learned Gerson adds, that *the face of Jesus resembled the face of Joseph*, whom his royal progenitor David foretold would be the *most beautiful among the sons of men*, Psal. xlv. 31, conformable to the word of God, *a father is known by his son*. Eccles. xi. 10. Joseph therefore had the agreeable features of Jesus and Mary; his very person was to create respect, reverence and affection, in the three eastern princes who came to adore their Redeemer, and infant God, in obscure Bethlehem. He was not only consort, but constant companion

to the Queen of Heaven, and seeing that beauty, according to St. Augustine, is a gift of God, rendering his works amiable, the omnipotent Son, who had full power to qualify his father upon earth, would not refuse this additional ornament to his other distinguishing perfections. The Bethulian Judith was admired by Holofernes, and the whole camp of the Assyrians, God himself giving finishing strokes (Judith x. 4) to complete the lovely object; such like favours granted to her and others cannot in any equity of construction be supposed refused to Joseph. It may be verified of him more than of inconsistent *Israel, thou art my servant, I will glory in thee.* Isaias xlix. 3. His life was all of one piece, and not party-coloured. What relates to particulars will be briefly explicated afterwards by meditations, from the time of his joyful birth, to his most happy departure in the divine arms of Jesus.

CHAP. II.—*At what Time the Devotion to St. Joseph became universal.*

THE great Alexander, standing before the tomb of Achilles, lamenting his own misfortune, and magnifying the advantage of the famed warrior: *Happy Achilles*, said he, *who had Homer to describe his conquests*; of which, notwithstanding, the greatest part is the product of poetical fancy. Let us extol the honour of St. Joseph, and say, *Thrice happy he! who had the Omnipotent to be his panegyrist!* We have already heard how the Holy Ghost has derived his pedigree from Abraham; the Scriptures take notice of him, by name, whenever occasion presents itself; angelical messengers from heaven are several times (St. Mat. i. 20. St. Mat. ii. 13, 20.) dispatched to him, and commanded to address Joseph; *the Son of God was subject and obedient to him*, Luke ii. 51; and had he been living when Christ bled on Mount Calvary for all mankind, questionless, he would have stood



hero like, with his dolorous spouse under the cross. Notwithstanding these encomiums, and what may be deduced from them, the bright lustre of St. Joseph's glory did not dart its beam from the clouds till many ages after his departure. It is true, St. Chrysostom, St. Gregory Nazianzen, St. Peter Chrysologus, with other ancient writers, here and there delivered in short sentences their sentiments concerning his merits and glory; but these may be termed rather transient hints, than intended panegyrics: for the devotion met not with any extraordinary encouragement till the reign of Pope Gregory, XI. of that name, in the fourteenth century.

The first place P. Barrie knows of consecrated to his memory, is a chapel in the cathedral church of Avignon, dedicated to St. Agricola. The altarpiece represents the Patriarch conducting Jesus and Mary into Egypt. Round about this chapel this Pope placed his coat of arms, and large effigieons of stone, increasing at the same time the revenues of the Canons

of that church. Perchance this was petitioning St. Joseph to dispose Italy for his reception, the Vicars of Christ having continued seventy years absent from Rome; *de facto* he returned to his Roman chair five years after his creation, which was *anno* 1370. So it seems as if St. Joseph, who brought our Lord out of Egypt, was instrumental in Gregory's return from a private city in France to the capital of the world. There belongs to the abovementioned chapel a confraternity of Bachelors, and a sodality of Virgins, who in the solemn procession on his festival carry in their hands poesies of flowers, as emblems of the fragrant odour of his eminent virtues. In our age devotion to him is universal through the habitable world: his feast is of precept, proper hymns are appointed in the divine office to sing his praises and prerogatives, every one contending to be the foremost in his favour.

But *why*? says the modern critic, *why* were the glorious merits of St. Joseph so long concealed? *Why* not

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generally made known to Christians before the 14th century? True believers are to tremble at *why's* and *wherefore's* in divine government. It was the ensnaring *quære* of the envious and malicious serpent, which was the master spring to ruin Adam and all his numerous posterity. *Why hath God commanded you not to eat?* Gen. iii. 1. A reason for the precept! It is unpardonable presumption to enter into the Omnipotent's hidden secrets, and damnable curiosity to dive into his secret decrees: it is sufficient to have evidence, *God has commanded it, the Omnipotent and Omniscient has so ordered it, his ways are unsearchable, and who has been his counsellor?* Ad Roman. xi. 33. 34 Infinite Wisdom knows best why universal devotion to the *keeper of his Lord*, is of so fresh a date. I offer something of the like nature by way of retortion, which carries no difficulty in the solution.

Moses having got a sight of the land of promise from the mountains of Nebo and Phasaga, died in the land of Moab, and the Lord buried him in

the valley of Moab, and no man knows his sepulchre unto this present day. Deut. xxxiv. 6. We know why he and Aaron were not permitted to enter the land of promise, but are absolutely ignorant, why God would bury him with private obsequies. *Why would not the Creator, glorifying them that glorify him,* 1 Kings ii. 30, honour Moses (who spoke to him face to face, Exod. xxxiii. 11, as man is accustomed to speak to his friend) as much as an inferior prophet Elizeus, whose very bones in the sepulchre, by a casual touch, revived a dead body? 4 Kings xii. 21. Again, the archangel Michael contended with the devil, concerning the body of the said Moses, *Epist. Jud. v 9*, why this strife, wherefore, and to what end? *When* was it? What was the subject of the hot dispute? The solid answer to this and other unknown resolves in divine administration, is that of St. Paul, *who on earth has been God's counsellor?* however prudent and pious interpreters, with humility and submission, offer to return an answer

to the rash *why's*. The Hebrew nation was so stupendously prone to the horrid crime of idolatry, that even when they were so terrified with divine Majesty thundering on the fiery mountain, they petitioned that Moses might *speak to them, not the Lord, lest they died*. *Exod. xx. 19.* Yet a few days after, concluding Moses to be suffocated with the continual and thick smoke, or to have been struck dead by some thunderbolt, (*Abulens in Exodus,*) they prostrated themselves before a deformed idol, owning the molten calf to have been their merciful deliverer from Egyptian slavery. If therefore they impiously adored what they knew to have been formed out of their *wives, sons, and daughters ear-rings* (*Exod. xxxii. 2.*) and bodkins, what would they not have done having certain possession of the *law-giver's body*? of his who had wrought so many prodigious wonders they were eye-witnesses of, both in Egypt and in the desert, both on land and in the Erithean sea? it is much to be feared they would have deified

the Thaumaturgus, as blind gentility placed Jupiter, Mars, and other renowned heroes in the number of the fictitious gods. To prevent so horrid an attempt, *no man knows the sepulchre of Moses unto this present day.*

This seems to answer sufficiently *why* the primitive ages took not full cognizance of St. Joseph's merits and glory, nor represented them clearly to Christ's faithful. Because Moses was so great a man, therefore his body was concealed; and because St. Joseph was so sublime a saint, it seemed expedient to the Catholic Church, directed by the Holy Ghost, not to appoint him any public honours. Observe the reason: scarce was Christianity well settled, when the Ebionites attempted to rob our blessed Redeemer of his divinity, affirming most sacrilegiously, that Joseph was the natural father of Jesus; and by consequence, they denied the angelical virginity of the Mother of God. The preaching up at that time St. Joseph's prerogatives, and eminent glory, would have



given seeming encouragement to those blasphemous heretics, and likewise might have stirred up dangerous thoughts in weak believers. For men, as is observed, are too frequently carried on to extremes, in honouring such as they love and admire, and the enlarging on what has been said already, with what wit and eloquence could set forth in his praises, might have suggested forcible doubts, that possibly he was the natural father of Jesus, because the real husband of Mary: especially conversing with the Ebionites, who were learned men of affected sanctity, and agreeable behaviour. Therefore the Catholic Church proceeded most prudently, choosing the other extreme, and passing him over in long silence, while she celebrated the memory of many, who could not pretend to stand in competition. These heterodox opinions having been detected, detested and extinguished, the danger ceases, and therefore universal devotion to the Foster Father of Jesus is fervorously entertained, and highly applauded,

wherever the Christian religion is professed.

The Omnipotent doth not order any thing but the strict rules of fit dispositions and suitable preparations, in the exactest measure and weight, (*Wisdom xi. 21.*) proportioning particulars to time and circumstances, as to his infinite wisdom seems conducing to his greater glory. This supreme Being, who so frequently in the Old Testament calls himself *the Lord of hosts, the God of armies*, is infinitely vigilant over his Church Militant upon earth, that the rebellious *gates of hell may not prevail*, St. Mat. xvi. 18. He seasonably sends forth fresh supplies to oppose diabolical adversaries, and notorious spreaders of erroneous doctrine: in the law of nature the holy patriarchs faced the enemy; in the written law commissioned prophets fought valiantly in the front of his forces; in hours of grace, the apostles and their successors, lawfully sent, force back the approaching rebels. Every care is taken against the consummation of the world; Enoch

and Elias are yet living as a reserve to head the elect in opposing monstrous Anti-Christ in his violent career; whose short reign will be attended with so great tyranny and terror, *that were it possible the very chosen would conform and be led into error.* St. Mat. xxiv. 24.

The protecting and sweet providence of God, from the very birth of Christianity, according to respective necessity, has from time to time raised up religious orders to curb and humble bold broachers of libertine novelties, disagreeable and dishonourable to the pure doctrine of Christ Jesus. *This Lord God of Armies* has strengthened his Church in the last corrupt ages, as some are piously of opinion, by the conquering reserve St. Joseph, especially against those who craftily lurk within its pale and offer the rankest poison, in the golden cup of reforming morals. To learned divines, this appears an answer of no small weight *why* the universal devotion was not entertained till the heretical contagion threatened a general

infection in most provinces and kingdoms, to the end the faithful might more perceptibly and efficaciously experience the power and protection of the Patriarch, calling on him with the greatest fervour, the devotion being in its meridian, to defend *his* pure doctrine, whose *divine person* he protected upon earth.

Other congruous reasons might be alledged why this devotion is of a late standing, but I hasten to shew how advantageous it is.

CHAP. III.—*Of the powerful Assistance of St. Joseph to his devout Clients.*

THE illuminated St. Teresa of Jesus, celebrated for frequent revelations, and religious observance, who successfully reformed the calced Carmelites, and erected monasteries and convents for both sexes, that she might surmount such difficulties which to prudent men appeared insuperable, took the glorious St. Joseph for her lord and advocate. She honoured him above all other saints, styling him

her *father* and *master*. Under his auspicious protection, she a poor virgin founded thirty-two religious houses, notwithstanding the opposition of secular princes, and several of her own order and profession. Take her own expression in commending this saint out of the sixth chapter of her Life, out of obedience penned by herself.

“ I have seen clearly that this Fa-  
“ ther and Lord of mine, St. Joseph,  
“ hath drawn me, as well out of this  
“ necessity, being crippled with sick-  
“ nefs, as out of others greater, when  
“ there was question of honour and  
“ loss of my soul, and that with more  
“ benefit and advantage than even  
“ myself could tell how to desire.  
“ Nay, I cannot remember that hi-  
“ therto I ever desired any thing by  
“ his means which he hath failed to  
“ obtain for me ; and it is able to  
“ amaze me when I consider the great  
“ favours which Almighty God hath  
“ done me by means of this blessed  
“ saint, and the dangers both of soul  
“ and body out of which he hath de-

“livered me; in such sort, that as it  
“seems our Lord hath given the grace  
“and power to other saints to succour  
“in some kind the necessities  
“of men; but I find, by good experience,  
“that this glorious saint  
“succours us in them all; and that  
“our Lord will make us understand,  
“that as he would be subject to Joseph upon earth, and that  
“by enjoying the name of his father,  
“and being, as it were, his director  
“and tutor, he might then command  
“him so; also now in heaven he  
“would grant whatsoever this saint  
“should desire. This truth has been  
“known by the experience of others,  
“whom I have desired to recommend  
“themselves to this saint, and now  
“many are become devoted to him,  
“and I myself have fresh experience  
“of this truth.—Whosoever wants a  
“maller who may instruct him to  
“pray, let him take this glorious saint  
“for his guide, and he shall never  
“lose his way.”—Thus St. Teresa  
declares her sentiments, and in several  
places of her excellent treatises,



she recounts how St. Joseph miraculously assisted her, not only in erecting monasteries, but also in dangers when travelling on such occasions.

St. Francis de Sales, that apostolical prelate, and deservedly prince of Geneva, was a singular promoter of devotion to St. Joseph. Founding the holy order of Visitation, he put the first monastery under his protection; he ordered his feast to be kept with the greatest solemnity in all their houses, directing by the institute all his spiritual children to make application to him; that the mistress of the novices should cause those upon trial, and even candidates, to get a habit of calling upon him when they begin their mental prayer, to take him for their guide and master in this holy exercise, respecting him as their tutelar patron.

St. Francis preached twice the same day at Lyons in honour to St. Joseph, as if he could never sufficiently enlarge in his praises. He also has left in writing his sentiments of this saint, in his *Spiritual Entertainments*, out of which I recite these few words:—

“ O ! what a great saint is the glorious St. Joseph !—He is not only a patriarch, but the chief of the patriarchs ; he is not only a confessor, but more than a confessor ; for in his prerogative of confessor is included the dignity of bishops, the generosity of martyrs, the purity of virgins, and the perfection of all other saints.” The last clause of this most illustrious bishop, viz. he having the perfection of all other saints, affords standard weight to what was said in the first chapter.

These two glorious saints, with several others before mentioned, erected publicly the standard of St. Joseph, and such as listed themselves experienced advantageous assistance. Probably St. Teresa and St. Francis were so eminent, and so far advanced in an interior life, because this patriarch was their spiritual doctor. Hear the former's opinion on this point : “ I have not known any one, who is seriously devoted to the glorious saint (Joseph), and performs to him several services, whom I find not

“ also to be much advanced in vir-  
“ tue; for he assists those souls much  
“ that recommend themselves to  
“ him.” *Invit. St. Teref. 1 c. 6.*

It is very observable, that those who aspire to be interior persons profit in his school; they have God before their eyes in all their actions, through his intercession, who was near thirty years in the continual presence of the *Word Incarnate*. The solid perfection of a soul consists much in interior and intense acts, directing each particular to the final end, which is God's glory, without mixture of sordid temporal motives. When St. Mary Magdalen Pazzi saw B. Aloysius Gonzaga in glory, it was given her to understand, that the resplendent crown was the reward of his frequent and fervorous interior acts. F. Severin, in a printed relation, recommends to posterity what proficients such are who are under the direction of St. Joseph. He accidentally met a young man, and entering with him into pious discourses, discovered that he was highly enlightened,

and replenished with more than ordinary gifts. He gave himself to prayer and recollection, was weaned from all affection to creatures, and what the sottish blind world runs after greedily and admires. Although he was not trained up to much learning, yet he discoursed not only like a saint, but a solid divine. F. Severin proposed to him many questions; among the rest, if he was not devout to St. Joseph? To the last he replied: "For  
" six years past he has been my di-  
" rector and protector; our Saviour  
" himself assigned him for my patron;  
" next to the blessed Virgin he is the  
" greatest saint in heaven, and had  
" the plenitude of the Holy Ghost,  
" like the apostles."

For what regards the maladies of the mind, St. Joseph has found wonderful success. F. Barry instances several remarkable cures in love and hatred, two predominant passions, which frequently appear almost incurable, and also of despair and shame to comply with duty. A certain person was so desponding with doubts of per-

severing in a religious state, that she was just upon the precipice of ruin, yet reciting nine days the beads of St. Joseph in his honour, she overcame the temptation she was sinking under. Others were wallowing in the sink of sensuality, and were immediately drawn out by this pattern of purity.

It is related of a lady, who was happily delivered from a deplorable slavery and miserable thralldom of mind, by the mediation of this saint, after the following manner:—fear and shame had such an ascendant over duty, that obligation could not prevail with her to procure a performance of what conscience suggested absolutely necessary, viz. *A sincere confession of her sins.* To break through these difficulties, she had recourse to St. Joseph, reciting his hymn and prayer nine days; on the last, she was touched with deep remorse, and was assisted with sufficient courage to expose the gangrening ulcers, the holy patriarch smoothing the rough way to the confessional. In gratitude the

convalescent, or to speak more properly, the perfectly cured lady carried afterwards an image about her neck of the Foster-Father of Jesus, to terrify the tempter for the future from approaching her with any of his dangerous and damnable suggestions.

To shew how tender St. Joseph is of his clients, I relate a passage out of Isidorus, lib. 4. c. 10. A gentleman of Venice, much devoted to the saint, was wont to recite daily upon his knees several prayers before St. Joseph's picture. Being visited by a mortal sickness, he had his thoughts more employed, as it frequently happens, concerning the recovery of his bodily health than the *one thing necessary*, (St. Luke x. 42.) the safety of his soul, and a happy departure from a short time to never ending eternity. St. Joseph mindful of his past services appeared to him, cautioning him to prepare for death, which drew nearer than was imagined. Hereupon he disposed himself, begged the last sacraments, and had the comfort of St. Jo-



seph's assistance in his painful agony.

A gentleman at Paris, whose character and habit required an unspotted life, had for five years abandoned himself to licentiousness, taking up the sordid practices of Epicure, and deserting the pure maxims of Jesus Christ. Sound advice was lost upon him, and kind relations could not prevail with him to live at least in the world like a man of honour, as was expected from his quality. He still continued to postpone the glory of his Creator, and set a low value upon the joys of heaven. All was ineffectual; for he would not leave the crowd of unhappy transgressors. Hereupon his friends having recourse to higher powers, desired a Father of the Society of Jesus to celebrate holy Mass in honour of St. Joseph, and another of the same body, not yet in holy orders, to offer up nine communions, to the end the scandalous delinquent might be stopped in his notorious wicked ways. At the same time their prayers were offered to God the party fell

most grievously sick, and the indisposition of his body was the cure of his soul; for the violent distemper increased to extremity, which so much terrified him, seeing as it were by serious reflections of what was past, and what was to come, the very gates of hell wide open to receive him, that he reverently disposed himself, by the Sacraments of the Church, to a Christian exit; resolving, if he recovered his former state of health, to employ his endeavours in a pious work of great importance, and much conducing to God's glory. He recovered, to the admiration of all, and happily compleated what he had purposed, to the great edification and comfort of such who knew any thing of his former proceedings. He himself owned the power and goodness of St. Joseph, in his sudden change and perfect conversion.

A young man at Lyons, of distinction, who had passed his years in the fear of God, resolved to quit the world, for the greater security of his salvation, but was diverted from his

pious resolution by friends and relations, acting out of temporal motives, who like *animal man savoured not the things that were from the Spirit of God, for they are folly to them, and cannot understand it.* 1 Cor. ii. 14. As frequently we are *punished by what we transgress in,* (*Wisd. xi. 15.*) and taste the bitter fruit of our own ways; (*Prov. i. 32.*) so it befel those unkind parents, dissuading the execution of the heavenly call. The son frustrated of his designs and desires, and slighting the former inspirations, began to find an ebb of devotion, and from a remissness, there followed a total neglect in spiritual duties. He betook himself to wars, and exercised the licentiousness of a profligate soldier, not only letting loose the bridle to ungoverned passions, but becoming a noted ringleader to such as were not ashamed to march after his black standard. The afflicted father and mother, too conscious of their mistaken affections, wept and lamented without ceasing; they acknowledged their error, in giving indirectly a be-

ginning to unforeseen scandals, they conjured him by frequent letters to look back, they importuned by friends who resided near him, to have pity on his doleful parents, but all was in vain; his heart was depraved and hardened, his understanding obscured and besotted: in excess of grief and confiding hope, they had recourse to St. Joseph, humbly petitioning him to use his mediation for bringing back the lost sheep, resolving to implore him daily, till he vouchsafed to hear their prayers. On the third day of their devotions, the prodigal son returned home, cast himself in confusion at his parents' feet; with sighs and tears he begged pardon for being the occasion of their long grief; he detested his follies, reformed his life, corresponded with his former vocation, entered religion, and died in it exemplarily. This is another trophy of St. Joseph's power and goodness.

The many votive pictures hanging round the altars of this glorious Saint proclaim sufficiently his universal protection. The number of his clients

and miraculous cures would swell volumes; he not only lends an assisting hand to distempers of the mind, but likewise to the diseases of the body. I give, in short, a few examples, by which a prudent judgment may be framed, what passed in distant and different parts of the world, and of which P. Barry had no account or knowledge.

Sister Jane de Angelis was confined to her bed fourteen days, by a formal pleurisy, which permitted her not to rest day or night; she had been let blood nine times in less than a fortnight's space, and the quantity taken from her occasioned such weakness, that she could scarce turn in bed, none expecting any other change but death, to free her from such torturing misery. She fell into violent convulsions, like one ready to give up the ghost, and though her exterior senses did her little service, her judgment was clear and at full liberty. 'As I lay in this sad condition' (hear her own words) 'there appeared unto me a large and beautiful cloud, in

• which on my right side stood my  
• good angel of incomparable beauty,  
• like a youth of eighteen years of  
• age, having in his right hand a fair  
• wax flaming taper; on the other  
• side in the cloud was my holy father  
• St. Joseph, with a countenance out-  
• shining the sun in brightness, and a  
• majesty more than human, resemb-  
• ling in age a man of forty or forty-  
• five years.—Beholding me, he laid  
• his hand upon that side where the  
• principal source was of my distem-  
• per, and anointed me with oil, or  
• some such sort of liquid, and the  
• anointed place remained something  
• moist. At the same instant, I found  
• myself perfectly recovered, and told  
• the flanders by as much.' Thus the  
religious woman.

All with tears of joy magnified the mercies of God, and the goodness of the holy Patriarch; but Monsieur Faveon, her Physician, and a Protestant, was most astonished, when entering her chamber to visit this despaired of patient, he found the family upon their knees in prayer, which



made him conclude she was departed, but was immediately undeceived by the late agonized woman herself, who arose from her knees, and walking towards him in her religious habit, with a smiling countenance recounted the particulars of her sudden recovery. He, who outfacing the best Historian and the holy Doctors of the Church, maintained miracles to have ceased, was forced to say, *God is Omnipotent!* who gives visible marks of his true Church in these latter ages, as he was pleased to do at the first preaching of the gospel. This miraculous cure was fully attested by sworn witnesses, both as to her dying condition, and instantaneous resettlement in health, as appears by a long printed relation, approved by the most illustrious bishop of Poitiers, wherein are several passages, here omitted for brevity.

This stupendous favour was attended with two others of the like nature, eight days after. When Madam Laubougement was seized with a desperate pleurisy, which four of the ablest

physicians of that place, judged incurable, and thought it in vain to apply remedies; she was then big with child, which was a great addition to her dangerous circumstances, but understanding that the ointment, remaining on the side of sister Jane de Angelis, had been taken off with a fine linen cloth, and was carefully preserved, an express was dispatched in all haste to Loudun, desiring the favour of lending the cloth, which had wiped off the heavenly balsam. It was brought to the sick lady, and the odoriferous flavour filled her with sensible joy, application being made to her side, she found herself perfectly recovered. She was also freed from another danger, of almost equal hazard, being delivered a few hours after of a child, which the Doctors and Surgeons concluded had been dead a whole month in her body.

A strong young man at Laubougement, called Claude Murner, was brought so low and feeble by a violent fever, and an ulcerated swelling, extending itself from the ribs to the

reins, that the Physicians of Mascon were of opinion, that the breaking of the ulcer would carry him off; or if he survived the running of collected humours, he would remain a cripple all the days of his life. Upon this result, some of the sick man's relations advised him to a vow to St. Joseph, to confess and communicate; a religious person offering the same day the unbloody sacrifice, to implore St. Joseph's assistance. This done, his side being rubbed with what had touched the aforesaid linen cloth, and swallowed a bit of paper, which had touched the same, and upon which was written the most sacred name of Jesus, that very day the fever left him, the swelling wasted away, his strength returned, so that three or four days after he undertook on horseback a journey of seven leagues. What I have instanced in these three persons, happened to others at Lyons, Trevoux and Loudun, who by the same means were cured of desperate distempers.

Margaret Rigaud, a professed religious, in St. Elizabeth's monastery at Lyons, fell from a floor one story high; the bruise of her head was so terrible, that the blood gushed out of her ears, and deprived her almost of sense. She could not take any rest, even on the softest pillow, and the evil increasing, a consultation of Physicians and Surgeons was held, who unanimously agreed the head was to be opened, otherwise she would absolutely lose her senses, if not her life. The languishing patient desired the hazardous operation might be deferred. In the mean time her Superior, moved by divine inspiration, ordered a Communion nine days together, in honour of St. Joseph, for her recovery. The violent pains continued eight days without abatement, and the ninth was running on, without any probable appearance of a change; wherefore some of the religious proposed, that the wounded creature should make a vow to St. Antoline, who by her intercession, obtained relief in such sort of bruises and contusions. A fet-

vorous devotee of the holy Patriarch being present, and unwilling that any other should have the honour of the cure, opposed vigorously the motion, and begged their patience, at least till the nine days were expired, which a few hours would complete. This being granted, she withdrew herself, and prostrating represented to St. Joseph how the wounded and sick woman had been first recommended to his tender compassion, that he would not permit any other to deprive him of the glory, and seeing he had power to relieve her, she conjured him by the eminent prerogatives of being nursing father of Jesus, and spouse to the mother of God, to grant her request; promising a grateful acknowledgment to perform nine mortifications in his honour, and to recite nine times his prayer, assigned by the holy Church. Towards the close of the ninth day, the sick person found herself so perfectly cured, that rising up, she could not contain herself from running round the house, and proclaiming, *a miracle, a miracle!* The glorious Saint

made her also happy, by an additional favour, viz. before her illness, it was a mortification to assist in the choir, and plain song seemed insupportable; but after the recovery, none was a more punctual observer of religious duties in the whole community: she set a high estimation on perfection, and chose St. Joseph for her principal Patron, for obtaining health to her body, but much more for divine grace to her soul.

The dreadful contagion of the plague is a visible scourge of God, it is a quick executioner of a provoked Deity, to make sinful nations sensible of the despised Omnipotent; it hurries on bold prevaricators by multitudes to the inexorable judgment-seat, there to receive an unrepalable sentence according to the nature of their crimes. To prevail with the stubborn Hebrews for an observance of the written law, God declared by Moses that he would punish the infringers with a pestilence. *Levit. xxvi. 25.* Which just threats are frequently repeated and inculcated, by the pro-



phets Jeremias and Ezekiel. For David's vanity in numbering the people, the Almighty sent a plague upon Israel, which swept off seventy thousand. *2 Kings xxiv. 15.* And at the full period of the world, mortals will be punished with plague and famine. *St. Mat. xxiv. 7.* It is needless to give instances of God's humbling provinces and kingdoms in the Law of Grace; it is yet fresh in memory, how one of the flourishing cities of the world was laid waste and desolate not half an age ago. The city of Avignon was visited by the plague, near the beginning of the last century. The inhabitants apprehended utter desolation, made solemn vows to God in honour of St. Joseph, to observe his feast for ever afterwards in the most pious manner, which put a stop to the spreading contagion. This caused several at Lyons to have recourse to him in like dangerous circumstances. Take the few following examples of the joyful success.

Monfieur Augery, an Advocate in the Parliament of Dauphine, being at

Lyons on the 15th of July, 1638, understood that his son Theodore, seven years of age, was seized by the plague, which as usual occasioned a violent fever. A hard swelling with the bubo shewed itself under the right arm. The afflicted father made a vow to God, that if St. Joseph, by his intercession, would procure his son's recovery, and preserve the rest of the family, consisting of nine persons, he would for nine days together visit the Saint's Church, and hear so many Masses; he would offer wax candles at his altar, with a votive picture, as a lasting acknowledgment of the favour. In the mean time the sick youth was visited by the Plague-surgeons, and although yet living, was given over and despaired of; accordingly, to prevent farther infection, he was carried to St. Lazarus's, the Pest-house; and that the miracle might appear more evident, at his arrival there he perfectly recovered, and not one of the family had afterwards the least symptom of the distemper. The father performed gratefully his promise,

hanging up at the Altar of St. Joseph a picture, movingly representing his wife, children and himself on their knees, giving thanks to God for the favour obtained by St. Joseph's intercession. At the bottom, the miracle was expressed, and attested by the Advocate's own hand.

Father Melchior de Faug, religious of the Society of Jesus, assisting those in the Pest-house to depart happily, was visited by the same infection, and lay in extremity, all despairing his recovery. A Priest of the same order observing him near expiring, made a vow (inviting the sick man to join with him) that upon the return of his health, he would offer nine Masses for thanksgiving in the church of St. Joseph: at that instant he recovered his speech, and likewise perfect health. The assistance and protection of the most holy Patriarch was so manifest, that those who were appointed masters of health in Lyons, to attend the infected, recommending themselves to St. Joseph, were all preserved, although in the discharge of

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their charitable duty, they were daily exposed to evident danger. Wherefore after the plague was abated, in the year 1638, they came processionally in a body to St. Joseph's Church, there confessing, communicating and presenting offerings at his altar, to express their tender gratitude for so signal a favour.

Tivenet, a pious old man, living near Lyons, in a village called St. Laurence D'Auger, being infected with the plague, enquired of the Vicar of the place, who came to dispose him for eternal life, whether there remained any hopes of a recovery? No other, answered the Pastor, than to have recourse to St. Joseph, making a vow to solemnize his Feast yearly, and that day to confess and communicate, and for nine days to recite seven Pater's and Ave's, concluding them with these words, Jesus, Maria, Joseph. The good old man made a vow, and that instant found himself freed from the contagion, admiring what was become of the sores and swellings which so suddenly disappeared.



Bennet Gontelle, a gardener, near St. Joseph's Church, lost every day one of his family, consisting of seventeen persons: his wife and all his children had been carried to the Pest-house, which was the next step to their graves; for there they died; he and a servant only survived, who expected hourly to follow the rest: Father Barry going to comfort them in that sad affliction, advised him to make a vow to St. Joseph, by which he should engage to offer several Masses and Communions in his honour if by his intercession he should obtain his and his servant's preservation from the plague, which had so infected his whole house; and the good Father joined with him in the vow. Almighty God heard their prayers, and both were secured from the danger.

Martin de Bau, a child of four years of age, was struck with the infection on a sudden, whilst he was at play, and all gave him for lost. The affectionate mother being in great desolation, was counselled to recommend him to St. Joseph. *To you I recom-*

*mend my child.* Two hours after her husband observing signs of approaching death, called his wife, who made a sort of pious complaint in these few words, *Ah! St. Joseph!* No sooner had she expressed her grief in this manner, but the child recovered, called to his mother for meat, arose from his bed, and cried out: *I am well, St. Joseph hath cured me.* There remained not the least mark of his disease, and his strength was so fully restored, that the next morning he went to St. Joseph's Church to return thanks. A votive picture was afterwards hung up, to testify not only the child's, but likewise the father's delivery from the same evil, by application to the bubo some cotton that had touched the heavenly ointment at Loudun, wherewith St. Joseph had cured miraculously a religious woman of that place, as is above mentioned.

I should pass the bounds of this short treatise, were I to set down the manifold favours granted by Almighty God at the intercession of St. Joseph. There is not any condition or state

of life, which has not experienced his power when invocated. Father Barry instances this truth in virgins, married persons and women travelling in child-birth. The devils in possessed persons have frequently shewn their indignation against the Foster-father of their Creator, and have trembled at St. Joseph's name. St. Teresa said much in few words, when acquainting the world, as is set down in the beginning of this chapter, 'that our Lord has given power to other Saints, to relieve us in some particular necessity, but that glorious St. Joseph has power to succour us in them all.'

The holy Patriarch not only protects particular clients, but likewise whole communities and religious orders. Two centuries are past, since the never sufficiently praised holy order of the Carthusians, apprehending a total dissolution, no subjects offering themselves to enter, held a general chapter at Grenoble: the main concern was to implore St. Joseph's assistance, in the dangerous condition

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of their languishing body, that it might not expire. To facilitate the way, and deserve compassion from heaven, the congregated fathers chose St. Joseph as their patron and protector; they passed an unalterable decree, that for the future his feast should not only be observed as of precept (which was not at that time commanded by the Church), but likewise that it should be solemnized, after the manner of one of the greatest days in the Roman Calendar. These pious offerings were accepted by St. Joseph, and proved so efficacious, that in all parts of the world where they are established, they have never since wanted proper subjects.

This glorious Saint brings also whole provinces and nations to the Catholic faith. New France owns him as a propagator of his gospel, whose legal parent he was. In the Southern parts of America, the chief Mission is called, *the Mission of St. Joseph*. Under his auspicious concurrence in the year 1626, two hundred families were baptized, and their



example influenced six neighbouring towns to unite themselves to the true faith, that they might partake of those spiritual and temporal blessings, which St. Joseph obtained for the thrice happy converts. From the entrance into that part of the world, the zealous missionaries had such an assurance of the Patriarch's power, that the fathers of the society gave the name of Joseph to the first Tarquois they baptized, offering him the first fruits of their apostolical labours.

What is already said, may be to Christ's faithful a sufficient proof of this comfortable truth, how those who are in St. Joseph's favour have Jesus and Mary propitious on their side. The blessed Virgin encourages devotion to her beloved spouse and royal consort, witness that eminent master of spirit and prudent director of St. Teresa, Baltazar Alvares, S. J. who lying sick at Validolid in a burning fever, one of his order assisting him, held up an image of our blessed Lady and St. Joseph, advising him to recommend himself to the spouse of

Mary: 'You have reason,' said Alvarez, 'for the mother of God has 'commanded me expressly to do so.' He owned afterwards that he received this command in the holy house of Loretto. Favourites of heaven are not only counselled, but commanded to practise and propagate devotion to our Patriarch, as was clearly signified to St. Bridgit and St. Gertrude. The holy mother St. Teresa of Jesus, was filled with infinite joy and delights (to use her own words in the foundation of Avila) when on the festival of our blessed Lady's Assumption, the queen of all saints and angels appeared to her with St. Joseph; the mother of God took her by the hand, telling her that the service done to her dear spouse St. Joseph, pleased her very much, promising assistance in her religious undertakings. The following chapter instructs how we may deserve to be taken notice of by the said immaculate Virgin, by honouring her beloved consort.

CHAP. IV.--*Divers Methods of honouring St. Joseph.*

**I**SAAC, the son of faithful Abraham, drawing near to his departure out of this world, ordered Esau to take his arms, his quiver and bow, (*Gen. xxvii. 3.*) to go abroad and provide by hunting what might be agreeable to his aged father's palate, and so receive *a blessing before he died*. No man certainly can be so grossly mistaken as to conclude from hence, that there was not variety at home to refresh the decrepid Patriarch. No, says Lynanus, herein lies couched a mystery of morality, that *a son who receives a blessing must be obsequious and serve his father*. The passage of the history of the Eastern Church, which was found and presented as authentic to Pope Adrian the VIth, is highly comfortable; how our Lord Jesus Christ assisting St. Joseph on his death bed, leaned on his pillow, took him by the hand, received his last breath, closed his eyes, and immediately before this glorious parent

expired, the Redeemer of all men gave him his blessing for a happy passage, with an assurance to bestow the same on all those who should offer sacrifice to God in honour of St. Joseph, on the day of his happy departure, which the Roman Church celebrates on the nineteenth of March, the Greeks observing it on the twenty-sixth of December, as Baronius recounts in his Martyrology. Though they differ about the time of his decease, yet they are unanimous as to the festival of his espousals, viz. the twenty second of January, of his flight into Egypt on the twenty-second of December, and his return from thence on the seventeenth of January. In observing these days, and performing other devotions to him, due regard is to be had to the above mentioned rule. *A son who expects a blessing must be obsequious to his father.*

Works are more faithful declarers of the mind than words, or sole lip-worship. The crafty Gibeonites with greater shew of eloquence and seeming piety, extolled the wonders of the

Omnipotent, than favoured Rahab, as we read at large in the second and ninth chapter of Josue. She said, *We have heard how the Lord dried up the waters of the Red Sea at your entrance, and what he hath done to the two Amorrhean kings Og and Sehon: But the men of Gibeon addressed Josue in the name of the Lord his God, proclaiming to the whole camp, We have heard the fame of his power, every thing he hath done in Egypt, and to the two kings on the other side of the river Jordan, Og and Basan, and Sehon of Hesebon: what a glorious profession of divine power! this notwithstanding, the Gibeonites were condemned to perpetual slavery of drawing water and hewing wood, whilst Rahab was honourably entertained, taken in marriage by Salmon, one of the chief princes of the Hebrew nation, from whose posterity our blessed Saviour Jesus was born. The solid reason of this different treatment was this; Rahab believed with a firm faith, and with full devotion entertained the two men sent to view the land, (Orig. hom. 10.*

in Josue); she acted as she believed; she ran the hazard of her life and fortune in protecting the spies, and setting them safe away; for had the king of Jerico known that she concealed them, no doubt herself and her house would have been consumed to ashes before the Israelites set flame to the city: whereas the pretended ambassadors from Gibeon calculated all their projects according to the dissembling rule of policy and self-preservation: Their contrivances and speeches were ushered in by falsehood; and although the Hebrew commander, and the wise seniors of the Synagogue, were so far over reached by the fictitious narrative, as to swear to a covenant, and spare their lives, yet they were justly sentenced to drudgery and slavery.

Wh. refore it will be of little advantage to give fair words, and say, *We have heard of the prerogatives, power and protection of St. Joseph*; we must perfect words by works, awake serious thoughts to serve God faithfully, for this is the chief method of honour-



ing the Patriarch. It is pharisaical cant to cry, Lord! Lord! and stop there; such hypocrites will not escape the deluge of flames: and it ought to be remembered that the *olive branch* brought by Noah's dove to the floating ark, presaging peace to mankind, had not only *verdant leaves*, but was loaden with *fruit*. Hence a holy doctor of the Church gives necessary advice, not to flourish with *leaves only*, or *words*, but to *offer fruit*, (St. Aug. Tract. 6 in Joan.) *to entertain* resolutely divine grace, to leave the tract of people out of the way, wandering towards eternal perdition, and by a virtuous life to deserve the favour of God, and the protection of St. Joseph.

If there is a feast in the whole year (next to those dedicated to God, and the blessed Virgin) giving assurance of obtaining our petitions and facilitating salvation, it is that of St. Joseph. St. Teresa declares in the sixth chapter of her life, "that for divers years she desired something of him

“ upon his festival day, and ever found  
 “ it granted; and if peradventure  
 “ her petition was any way deficient,  
 “ he redressed it for her greater good.”  
 On that day holy sacraments are to be  
 frequented, entertaining with flaming  
 devotion that Omnipotent committed  
 to the care of St. Joseph. The vo-  
 tive oblation may be recited, and his  
 life read over. It will also be a sin-  
 gular way of honouring him, if the  
 pious clients procure the sacrament  
 of Holy Mass to be offered to God in  
 thanksgiving for his eminent glory.

The universal practice of honour-  
 ing our holy Patriarch, is to recite his  
 little office, his litanies, hymn and  
 prayer; either daily, or for a set time,  
 as occasion or devotion require and  
 suggest. They are a compendious  
 eulogium of his praises. The fol-  
 lowing example will acquaint you how  
 acceptable they are to him.

☛ The Priors of the Ursulins, of the  
 house of Cose and Loudun, by Al-  
 mighty God's permission, was pos-  
 sessed with an evil spirit, who tor-  
 mented her after a violent manner.

To de  
 tyrant  
 St. Jo  
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To defend herself against his insulting tyranny, she was accustomed to crave St. Joseph's blessing a devotion practised by many others before the exorcisms, as a dutiful child would beg of a compassionate parent. She also obliged herself to recite daily St. Joseph's office, for a whole year, and to perform some weekly penance in his honour. Two or three days after the vow, the infernal enemy was forced away at the first exorcism, leaving the mark of a cross on her forehead, as the priest had enjoined him; and to the end it might be known that it was at the Patriarch's intercession, the devil cried out hideously, *Joseph is come, and Leviathan must depart.*

Some religious of the said order of St. Ursula had a design to settle at Lambesa in Provence, the inhabitants testifying an earnest desire of their coming and company; wherefore they transported themselves thither, but met with unexpected difficulties and disappointments. They could not so much as find a proper house to hire, so resolved to return back to Aix,

from whence they came. In the mean time they had recourse to St. Joseph; they chose him for the protector of their pious intentions, and resolved to recite after Mass his Litany for nine days together. Before the ninth day, a virtuous priest of substance and authority came to discourse the Ursulin superior: he had built a church, and a house adjoining to it, near Lambesa, in honour of St. Teresa: he made an offer to them both of house and church, and actually put them into possession of both; as if St. Teresa had directed him to provide for those devotees of her dear *father and founder*.

A religious house of Nuns (as P. Barry had from the mouth of a superior) had not received a considerable time any novices, which occasioned great affliction, lest in few years the family should want subjects to continue a succession. They all resolved to say St. Joseph's prayer after Mass, for six months; which devotion being unanimously and chearfully undertaken, that the Patriarch, who is

a protector of religious orders, would vouchsafe to provide for them. A few days after a young lady of quality and fortune offered herself to live and die with them in God's service. The community was sensible of the favour, and to this day continue their grateful acknowledgment. I cannot omit what is worthy of memory, the devotion of Monsieur Henry Chycot, canon of Chartres, which he expressed for the aforesaid prayer. By his last Will and Testament, he left a considerable sum of money, as a perpetual foundation, to be distributed yearly amongst the canons of Chartres, with this obligation, to sing daily St. Joseph's hymn and prayer; to the end he might contribute when absent, in a more happy place, to have his special patron honoured upon earth.

As most persons place in their best rooms representations in colours of such as they tenderly love, as testimonies of their esteem and affection; so the devout clients of St. Joseph will do well to set up his picture in their private oratories, or carry it in minia-

ture about them. St. Teresa practised this, and the little picture is still preserved at Avila. By our Lord's direction, she placed over the gate of her first reformed monastery, the statue of St. Joseph, with that of his immaculate Spouse. When St. Francis de Sales departed most happily at Lyons, there was but one loose picture found in his breviary, which was of St. Joseph. The aforesaid St. Teresa now enjoys the lasting reward due to her merits, and indefatigable labour, in reforming an ancient religious order, and erecting thirty-two monasteries. We by a personal reformation of our lives, must fit ourselves for one of those happy mansions in the house of our heavenly Father, (St. John xiv. 2.); for a very short time will fix us in *the house of our eternity*. Eccles. xii. 5. We must not lose short day-light in carrying on the great work; but humbly beg St. Joseph's helping hand, that as he, father like, assisted that poor virgin in the reformation, so likewise he will favour us his petitioners in taking secure



possession of our glorious and everlasting mansions.

To prepare the way we are to make friends of Mammon, that when death calls upon us we may be received into *eternal tabernacles*. St. Luke xvi. 9. The prophet Daniel counselled impious and proud Nabuchodonosor, *to redeem his sins with alms-deeds, and his iniquities by shewing mercy to the poor*, (Dan. iv. 24.): *perhaps*, said he, *God will forgive thy crimes, and mitigate the punishment*. This is another method of deserving St. Joseph's favourable protection, to give alms to a man in years, to a poor woman and her infant, in honour of the sacred family of Nazareth. St. Vincent Ferrerius relates, how a gentleman of Valence had a pious custom, amongst his other good works, every Christmas-day, to invite a woman with a sucking child, and an elderly man, to dine with him, for the love he bore to Jesus, Mary and Joseph. This was so pleasing to God, that he had the comfort and joy to behold on his death-bed the divine guests, who

were personated by those he entertained; and as he was departing this world they gave him this transporting invitation to paradise:—"Friend, " you have every year invited us to " a feast in your house, now come, " and we will receive you to our " feast, and into the dwelling-place " of the blessed, there to reign with " us, and them, in all sorts of contentment, as long as a happy eternity shall last."—O! what comfort for such small matters, to *receive a hundred fold, and eternal life.* St. Mat. ix. 29.

St. Joseph revealed himself, a devotion very acceptable to him, after the following manner:—Two religious of St. Francis's order having suffered shipwreck, they happily laid hold of a large plank which bore them up; they were tossed three days and three nights in this evident danger of sinking, and in this starving distress they had recourse to St. Joseph, petitioning his powerful assistance in their desperate circumstances. The saint, though unknown, shewed himself to them, like

a young man of beautiful and comely features, he encouraged them not to despond, and, as a skilful pilot conducted them safe to a secure harbour. At their landing, they humbly craved the name of their deliverer, that they might personally acknowledge the singular favour? He told them his name was Joseph, and recommended to them the daily recital of seven *Our Father's*, and as many *Hail Mary's*, in memory of his seven griefs, and seven joys, which he related to them; and having said this, he disappeared. The good religious put the mentioned devotion into speedy execution, and likewise meditated on the mysteries suggested by him, who had secured them from the dangers of the deep. Peter Morales adds that St. Joseph had assured them, that he would succour others in necessity, and particularly at the hour of death, provided they practised the same devotion.

The holy Minim Gasper Bond had a laudable practice, at his going out of the convent, at his return, and in most of his actions, to call upon Jesus,

Mary and Joseph, that they would bestow a blessing upon his undertakings. On his death bed he experienced incredible consolation, and begged of the assistants and visitors, that when they saw him agonizing, they would repeat with an audible voice these three sacred names. The last words he was heard to articulate on rendering of his soul to God, were, Jesus, Maria, Joseph. It is in the power of many to honour the name of Joseph, by giving it to children in holy baptism, or at the use of reason taking it in the sacrament of confirmation. Wicked forcerers have been forced to own, that they have less power over infants that bear his name. It is a matter of fact, that a person of quality having lost all his children by witchcraft, a few days after their birth, was counselled by one, who had too great an insight into that black and diabolical art, to name his next son Joseph; it was done, and the child lived to inherit his father's estate and honour.

The learned Gerson observes, how such who have lost any thing they much esteem, having recourse to St. Joseph, and performing some devotions in his honour, either to retrieve what is gone, or bearing it with patience and resignation, are more favoured in some other kind. He brings a proof of what he asserts, how an acquaintance of his recovered by these means what he had lost of great value. It is perhaps on this account that scrupulous and anxious persons implore his assistance, to obtain the inestimable treasure of serenity of mind, and interior repose. He who experienced the loss of Jesus, when remaining in the temple of Jerusalem, and the grief it cost him, doubtless will not be wanting to comfort his pious clients in anxiety and aridities. Not to pass over in silence the merits of the above mentioned John Gerson, know, that it is he who being the zealous and eminently learned Chancellor of the University of Paris, was so passionate a lover and admirer of our Patriarch, that he com-

posed a book in his honour, entitled *Josephin*; and in all his eloquent sermons he never omitted to mention his praises. He maintains, that he was sanctified in his mother's womb; that he had also absolute command over sensuality; that he was confirmed in grace; that he arose with our blessed Saviour Jesus Christ; that, except the blessed Virgin, no saint is greater in heaven. I could not omit this short digression, Gerson having been selected as one of the chief panegyrists of St. Joseph.

Some, in respect to St. Joseph, invoke saints who bore his name, viz. St. Joseph, son to the Samaritan woman, that gave water to our blessed Redeemer at the well of Jacob, (*St. John* iv. 6.); his feast is celebrated, according to Baronius's Martyrology on the twentieth of March, suffering then martyrdom with his mother and brother Victor. St. Joseph the Just, a title given him by the Holy Ghost, *Acts* i. 23.: he was one of the seventy-two disciples; and the apostles had so great an opinion of his sanctity,



that they named him with St. Matthias to be substituted in the traitor Judas's apostleship. The records of Alexandria place him afterwards the Bishop of Jerusalem. The noble centurion, St. Joseph of Arimathea, seems to claim from Great Britain particular veneration. This worthy disciple of Christ discharged his duty in time of greatest danger, when the very Apostles absconded: at that time animated by the dolorous Mother, he entered boldly into Pilate's presence, not regarding his being censured an enemy to the state, begged the body, embalmed it, and had the honour to deposite the same in a sepulchre prepared for himself. He suppld, as I may say, the place of our great Patriarch; the one providing for Jesus living, the other took care of Jesus dead upon the cross, and for his interment. He came afterwards to preach the gospel in our island, and founded our first primitive monastery of Glastonbury.

A religious man of Montferat used to mediate frequently upon St. Jo-

seph's journey into Egypt, how he had afforded all manner of services to his God and to his chaste Spouse. He intermixed repeated thanks to the princely Patriarch, for what he had done upon all occasions for his dear Redeemer, and the Virgin-Mother his special advocate. It so fell out, that on a time, being at some distance from his monastery, and returning home, he mistook the road, and wandered up and down, and round a mountain, so long, that he gave himself for lost; he was not without apprehensions of a violent death from savage beasts, which often shewed themselves in that place, or perishing by contagious fogs. The solitude of the night increased the horror, and no means to escape appeared, but to implore Heaven. He therefore recommended himself in the most fervent manner to St. Joseph's protection. No sooner had he done this, but he found the good effect of his prayer. He immediately met a grave man leading an ass, upon which sat a woman with an infant in her arms.

This happy encounter was entertained with a wonderful comfort and joy, which was considerably augmented, when asking the way, he who led the ass offered to be his guide, and bid him follow. As they went together, the whole discourse was of God, and the religious never found his affections so charmed even in time of fervorous prayer. Entering the village, where the monastery stood, they all three disappeared, which gave assurance that St. Joseph had delivered him from the danger; so acceptable it was to meditate on some passage of his life, and to thank him for the care he took, and pains he underwent for him, whom we adore in heaven, and upon our altars.

There are several other ways of honouring him, as to say the beads, to wear rings with his name engraved, as some did at Lyons in the time of the pestilence, and not one of that number were touched with the contagion; others have on their rings, Jesus, Maria, Joseph. But he is chiefly honoured, as is above said, by

honouring God in the imitation of his virtues. The pious reader may pick up what is most proper for his state. I mention one virtue, because the blessed Virgin was pleased to reveal to St. Bridgit, that it had merited a particular crown of glory to St. Joseph. It was an uninterrupted series of acts of conformity to the Divine pleasure. In this he took so great satisfaction, that it was his frequent aspiration, *Oh! that I may live to see the will of God fulfilled.* In Revel. St. Bridgit. Whether he saw his Saviour in the manger, or was obliged to withdraw into Egypt, whatever happened, did not *contristate this just man*, (Prov. xii. 21.), he never changed countenance, but was equal in the inequality of human contingencies. We may without toil imitate the Patriarch, by desiring *only to live to fulfil the will of God.* Necessary resignation will make us easy in all contrarieties and disappointments. It is both displeasing to our Maker, and contrary to right reason, to fret and vex ourselves at what is not in our

power to prevent. It also frequently happens, that what we lament as wanting, is more beneficial than what we prayed to obtain. A true believer must walk towards everlasting bliss, betwixt prosperity and adversity, with a contempt of both. Such men as censure God's government of the world, are not only malecontents, but open rebels. Although they mutter and murmur, it makes no alteration in divine decrees, *for his counsel stands, and his whole will is justified.* *Isaias* xlv. 10. The Almighty is a most tender Father, and an unerring master, he takes care of *every hair of our heads*, *St. Mat.* x. 30, and provides better for us than we could do for ourselves, bestowing temporal blessings or salutary scourges, according to what conduces to the improvement of his servants, who, like royal David, *bles the Lord in all times, his praise is always in their mouths*, *Psalms* xxxiii. 2. Whether they are upon Mount Thabor or Mount Calvary, they would not change their posts, because God had placed them there.

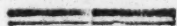
This perfect conformity goes hand in hand with constant joy, *for in the throng of human miseries no mortal is more happy than he, who is what he would be.* Salvian. lib. de Provident. Such souls as resolve seriously to enter after Christ into glory, must suffer with him, and humbly beg to partake of his divine appointments, and never to abandon him, even when sweating blood in the garden, and praying to his heavenly Father, *not as I, but as thou wilt have it.* St. Mat. xxvi. 39.

Other particular virtues of St. Joseph, may be taken notice of, in the eight meditations of his life; they need no orator to commend them, no more than a jewel of inestimable value, a foil to set it off.



## DEVOTIONS TO ST. JOSEPH,

Spouse of the B. V. MARY;

With Meditations on several Passages of  
his Life.

*An Oblation to St. Joseph to choose him  
for a Patron.*

**O** Holy Joseph! Virgin-Spouse of the Virgin-Mother of God, most glorious advocate of all such as are in danger, or in their last agony; and most faithful protector of all the servants of Mary your dearest Spouse: I N. N. in the presence of Jesus and Mary, do from this moment choose you for my Lord and Master, for my powerful patron and advocate, for the obtaining a most happy death: and I firmly resolve and purpose, never to forsake you; and never to say or do, nor even to suffer any under my charge to say or do, any thing against your honour; receive me therefore for your perpetual servant, and recommend me to the constant

protection of Mary your dearest spouse, and to the everlasting mercies of Jesus my Saviour: assist me in all the actions of my whole life, all which I now offer to the greater and everlasting glory of Jesus and Mary, as well as to your own. Never therefore forsake me, and whatsoever grace you see most necessary and profitable to me, obtain it for me now, and at the hour of my death, to which I now invite you, against the uncertain hour in which it shall happen, that whatsoever at this present, and on my death-bed, I cannot of myself obtain, may by your gracious intercession be bestowed upon me, by the God of my soul, our Lord Jesus Christ, who together with the Father, &c.

*Ex Man. Tyrnavien.*

THE OFFICE OF ST. JOSEPH.

*At Mattins.*

Jesus, Mary, Joseph.

V. **O** Lord, open my lips.

R. And my mouth shall declare thy praise.

V. O God, incline unto my aid.

R. O Lord, make haste to help me.

V. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.

R. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen, Alleluiah.

*The Hymn.*

**J**OSEPH, the son of David was  
esteem'd  
Father of Jesus, who the world re-  
deem'd.

The Virgin he espous'd,  
In heart conjoin'd,  
And guardian was of both by heaven  
assign'd.

*Ant.* All hail honour of the Patri-  
archs, steward of the holy Church of  
God, who didst conserve the bread of  
life, and the wheat of the elect.

V. O holy Joseph, pray for us.

R. That we may be made worthy  
of the promises of Christ.

*The Prayer.*

**A**SSIST us, O Lord, we beseech  
thee, by the merits of the  
Spouse of thy holy Mother, that what  
of ourselves we cannot obtain, may

be given us through his intercession:  
Who livest and reignest with God  
the Father, in unity of the Holy  
Ghost, world without end. *Amen.*

*At Prime.*

Jesus, Mary, Joseph.

V. **O** God, incline unto my aid.  
R. O Lord, make haste to  
help me.

V. Glory be to the Father, &c.  
Alleluiah.

*The Hymn.*

**W**HEN thou the Virgin did  
with child perceive,  
Perplex'd in thought, thou her de-  
sign'd to leave;  
But in thy sleep an angel with his  
voice,

Advis'd thee not to fear, but to rejoice.

*Ant.* All hail honour of, &c. as  
*before, p. 91.*

*The Prayer.*

**A**SSIST us, O Lord, we beseech  
thee, &c. as *before, p. 91.*

*At the third Hour.*

Jesus, Mary, Joseph.

V. **O** God, incline unto my aid.

R. O Lord, make haste to help me.

V. Glory be to the Father, &c.  
Alleluiah.

*The Hymn.*

**T**O Bethlehem, with the pregnant  
Virgin he,  
Travell'd to pay th' imposed subsidy:  
Where Christ was to be born, and in  
which place,  
He shortly should his infant Lord  
embrace.

*Ant.* All hail honour of, &c. *as before, p. 91.*

V. O holy Joseph, pray for us.

R. That we may be made worthy  
of the promises of Christ.

*The Prayer.*

**A**SSIST us, O Lord, we beseech  
thee, &c. *as before, p. 91.*

*At the sixth Hour.*

Jesus, Mary, Joseph.

V. **O** God, incline unto my aid.

R. O Lord, make haste to help me.

V. Glory be to the Father, &c.  
Alleluiah.

*The Hymn.*

**W**HEN cruel Herod th' innocents oppress'd,  
By th' angel warn'd, thou call'dst thy spouse from rest;  
That taking her celestial babe, she might,  
With thee to Egypt, make a speedy flight.

*Ant.* All hail honour of, &c. as before, p. 91.

V. O holy Joseph, pray for us.

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

*The Prayer.*

**A**SSIST us, O Lord, we beseech thee, &c. as before, p. 91.

*At the ninth Hour.*

Jesus, Mary, Joseph.

V. **O** God, incline unto my aid.

R. O Lord, make haste to help me.

V. Glory be to the Father, &c.  
Alleluiah.



The Hymn.

**T**HY foes being dead, thou mad'st  
no longer stay;  
But into Galilee didst bring away,  
Mother and child, heaven this advice  
did give,  
And thou at Nazareth did'st humble  
live.

*Ant.* All hail honour of, &c. *as before*, p. 91.

V. Pray for us, O holy Joseph.

R. That we may be made worthy  
of the promises of Christ.

The Prayer.

**A**SSIST us, O Lord, we beseech  
thee, &c. *as before*, p. 91.

At Even-Song.

Jesus, Mary, Joseph.

V. **O** God, incline unto my aid.

R. O Lord, make haste to  
help me

V. Glory be to the Father, &c.  
Alleluiah.

The Hymn.

**B**LESS'D Jesus (of thine eyes the  
glorious light)  
At twelve years old was lost, unto  
thy sight.

But finding him among the doctors  
thou

His guardian was, to whom the an-  
gels bow.

*Ant.* All hail honour of, &c. as  
before, p. 91.

*V.* Pray for us, O holy Joseph.

*R.* That we may be made worthy  
of the promises of Christ.

*The Prayer.*

**A**SSIST us, O Lord, we beseech  
thee, &c. as before, p. 91.

*At Complin.*

Jesus, Mary, Joseph.

*V.* **C**ONVERT us, O God, our  
Saviour.

*R.* And turn away thine anger  
from us:

*V.* O God, incline unto my aid.

*R.* O Lord, make haste to help me.

*V.* Glory be to the Father, &c.

Alleluiah.

*The Hymn.*

**O** Happy man to be embraced by  
Christ and the Virgin in death's  
agony:

*The Litany of St. Joseph.* 97

That so thou might'st thy course directly bend,  
To Limbo, having made a godly end.

*Ant.* All hail honour of, &c. *as before*, p. 91.

V. O holy Joseph, pray for us.

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

*The Prayer.*

ASSIST us, O Lord, we beseech thee, &c. *as before*, p. 91.

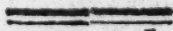
*The Commendation.*

THESE hours canonical I have address'd

To thee, St. Joseph, from a zealous breast:

That by thy prayers, thou wilt obtain that I

May live with thee, in heaven eternally. *Amen.*



THE LITANY OF ST. JOSEPH.

LORD, have mercy on us.

Christ, have mercy on us.

Lord, have mercy on us.

E

Christ hear us.

Christ graciously hear us.

O God the Father, Creator of the world, have mercy on us.

O God the Son, Redeemer of mankind, have mercy on us.

O God the Holy Ghost, perfecter of the elect, have mercy on us.

O sacred Trinity, three Persons and one God, have mercy on us.

Holy Mary, Queen of the whole world,

St. Joseph, Spouse of the blessed Virgin,

St. Joseph, sanctified before birth,

St. Joseph, privileged and preserved from all mortal sin,

St. Joseph, confirmed in grace,

St. Joseph, Honor of the Patriarchs,

St. Joseph, replenished with unspeakable benedictions,

St. Joseph, reputed father of Jesus,

St. Joseph, abounding with all the gifts of the Holy Ghost,

St. Joseph, who adored Jesus in the crib,

St. Joseph, an Angelical Man,

*Pray for us.*

St. Joseph, who by the admonition  
of the good Angel preservedst  
Christ from the fury of Herod,

St. Joseph, who, as a principality  
of the first Hierarchy of An-  
gels, didst govern Christ,

St. Joseph, who, as a virtue, wert  
minister to Christ,

St. Joseph, greater than the Do-  
minations, whom the King and  
Queen of Heaven obeyed,

St. Joseph, in whose arms and bo-  
som Christ was seated as in a  
throne,

St. Joseph, who, as a Cherubim,  
hadst care of the Virgin of the  
true Paradise,

St. Joseph, a seraphical man,

St. Joseph, a most high contem-  
plative soul,

St. Joseph, who diedst in Christ's  
arms,

St. Joseph, who didst hear ange-  
lical music,

St. Joseph, Precursor of Christ  
to the holy Fathers in Limbo,

St. Joseph, who arose with Christ  
from the dead,

*Pray for us.*

St. Joseph, who in body and  
mind didst enjoy peculiar gifts  
of glory,

St. Joseph, our dear Patron and  
Defender,

Lamb of God, that takest away the  
sins of the world, spare us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, that takest away the  
sins of the world, hear us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, that takest away the  
sins of the world, have mercy on  
us.

O Lord, hear my prayer:

And let my supplication come to thee.

*The Prayer.*

**A**SSIST us, O Lord, we beseech  
thee, *as before*, p. 91.

*The Hymn in honour of St. Joseph.*

**H**AIL, holy Joseph, whose pure  
mind,

Render thee fit to be design'd,

The husband of a most pure bride,

To royal David both ally'd.

Hail Guardian of God's Son on earth,

Foretold of his stupendous birth,



And other heavenly secrets, known  
But to thyself and spouse alone.

How often did thy happy arms,  
Secure that sacred babe from harms:  
When with him, and thy Virgin-wife,  
Constrain'd to fly, to save his life!  
With what unspeakable delight  
Didst thou enjoy the precious sight  
Of thy Redeemer! whose bright eyes  
Did far out-shine the sun's uprise.

How many times didst thou embrace

The tender giver of all grace?

And didst as often fix a kiss,  
To fill the measure of thy bliss!

To whom did God such joys impart,  
As to thine own and spouse's heart?  
Which did strange comforts entertain,  
When Jesus lost, was found again.  
Most happy was thy house, to be  
The Paradise, in which the Tree  
Of Life did prosper, when the ground  
Where that first grew could not be  
found:

How sweetened was thy daily pains,  
While Jesus lived on thy gains!  
Whereby the food that ye did eat,  
Became all sanctified meat.

With thee he frequently did walk,  
Calling thee father in his talk;  
And by his charming sweet discourse  
Did sorrows from thy heart divorce.  
No instruments, however strung,  
'Ere sounded like our Saviour's tongue;  
Which thou heard'st hourly! happy,  
then,

Wert thou above the rest of men.

And when in age, resistless death  
Gave summons to thy latest breath,  
Could thou more happiness devise,  
Than to have Jesus close thine eyes?  
Great is thy glory sure above,  
Whom Christ did so entirely love;  
As on thy person to bestow  
Such privileges here below.  
Then let us all, with one consent,  
Beseech Saint Joseph to present  
Our wants to God, and for us pray,  
That serve our Lord we ever may.

*Amen.*

*The Prayer.*

**O**Mnipotent and merciful Lord  
Jesus, who didst provide Saint  
Joseph, the just son of David, for the  
spouse of blessed Mary, thy Virgin-  
mother, and chose him for thy nurs-

ing Father : grant, we beseech thee, that by his prayers and merits, thy Church may enjoy a perfect peace, and so arrive at the consolation of thy everlasting vision. Through the same Lord Jesus our Saviour, who with the Father and the Holy Ghost, liveth and reigneth one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

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THE BEADS OF ST. JOSEPH.

**U**PON the great beads, you recite the following prayer which the holy Church makes use of in its divine Office.

*The Prayer.*

**A**SSIST us, O Lord, we beseech thee, by the merits of the spouse of thy most holy mother, that what of ourselves we cannot obtain, may be given us by his intercession : Who livest and reignest with God the Father, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, world without end. *Amen.*

*Upon the lesser Beads you say,*

**M**OST glorious patriarch St. Joseph, foster-father of Jesus, and spouse of the ever immaculate mother

of God, pray for us now, and at the hour of our death. *Amen.*

---

*Seven Prayers in honour of the Seven Dolours and Seven Joys of St. Joseph.*

*The first Dolour.*

The tormenting thoughts of forsaking his spouse with child.

*The first Joy.*

The comfortable message of the angel, *Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary for thy wife.*

*The Prayer.*

**O** Chaste Joseph ! I most humbly petition by this grief and this joy, that you will make supplication for my being preserved in unalterable purity of soul and body, that I may overcome all temptations and perplexities, curb my censuring others, and that I may, by concurring with divine inspirations, deserve the favourable assistance of my good angel, in directing me to the performance of my duty towards God and man, through our Lord Jesus Christ, who with the Father and the Holy Ghost

liveth and reigneth one God, world without end. *Amen.*

Our Father, &c. Hail Mary, &c.

*The second Dolour.*

St. Joseph's beholding little Jesus shivering with cold in the manger, and so miserably accommodated.

*The second Joy.*

His hearing the angelical harmony. The adorations of the shepherds, and the three kings prostrate before the Infant God.

*The Prayer.*

**C**ompassionate St. Joseph, I most humbly petition, by this grief and this joy, that you will make intercession for me, that my frozen heart may become a fervent receptacle of my dear Redeemer in the adorable Sacrament of the Altar; and my poor soul a permanent dwelling-place of the Holy Ghost. I now freely offer my memory, will and understanding to be governed by divine providence, beseeching God by your merits, that I may adore him so faithfully on earth, as to deserve to sing eternally with the blessed angels.

that joyful canticle, Glory be to God on high, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Our Father, &c. Hail Mary, &c.

*The third Dolour.*

St. Joseph's beholding Christ to shed his sacred blood so early in the circumcision.

*The third Joy.*

His pronouncing the most sacred and saving name of Jesus, as the eternal Father had ordered by the angel.

*The Prayer.*

**S**AINTE Joseph my potent patron! I most humbly petition by this grief and by this joy, that you will make intercession for me, that I may shed tears of perfect contrition, for being the occasion of my dear Redeemer's shedding his most precious blood; that if called to a trial for his sake, I may chearfully offer up my life to him who gave it. I also rejoice that my Jesus was pleased to bleed at that tender age, to ransom me and all mankind from everlasting perdition. I likewise beg that the saving name of Jesus may be so deeply imprinted in



my heart and memory, as never to think, say, or do any thing against God's honour: through the same Lord Jesus Christ, &c.

Our Father, &c. Hail Mary, &c.

*The fourth Dolour.*

The words of Simeon on the day of the purification, *that a sword should pierce the blessed Virgin's heart.*

*The fourth Joy.*

What Simeon said, that Christ would be a light to the Gentiles, the glory of Israel, and resurrection of many.

*The Prayer.*

**S**AINTE Joseph! comforter of the afflicted, I most humbly petition by this grief and this joy, that I may be tender and compassionate in the sorrows and misfortunes of my neighbour, that I may partake fully of the dolours and merits of the blessed Virgin, standing under the heavy cross of her bleeding Son, to the end my Saviour may be a clear light to me in walking the narrow way by a holy life, towards the beatifical vision of my God, and a glorious resurrection.

Through the same Lord Jesus Christ,  
&c.

Our Father, &c. Hail Mary, &c.

*The fifth Dolour.*

Christ's flight into Egypt, occasioned by persecuting Herod.

*The fifth Joy.*

The falling down of Egyptian idols at the approach of the Son of God.

*The Prayer.*

**H**OLY St. Joseph! perfectly resigned to Almighty God's fatherly appointments and permissions; I most humbly petition by this grief and this joy, that I may willingly submit and carefully conform to whatever crosses or contrarieties the divine wisdom and infinite goodness see expedient for me, that I may be as equally thankful in the sharpest adversity, as in flourishing prosperity. That I may by your intercession experience the unspeakable joy of trampling on and keeping under foot the deformed idols of inordinate passions, and vain sordid pleasures, so much courted and adored by the vicious world: through our Lord Jesus Christ, &c.

Our Father, &c. Hail Mary, &c.

*The sixth Dolour.*

The fear St. Joseph had at his coming from Egypt, hearing that Archelaus reigned.

*The sixth Joy.*

Orders from heaven by an angel, to return home with Jesus and his blessed mother.

*The Prayer.*

**V**IGILANT St. Joseph! careful guardian of Jesus and Mary, look down from heaven upon a poor client surrounded with many dangers of falling into sin, and dropping into hell; I most humbly petition by this grief and this joy, that you will intercede for me, that I may not fear any thing but offending my good God. Protect me from the tyranny of infernal powers, and beg by the passion of Christ, that he will compassionate my infirmity, and enable me with his grace to walk cautiously betwixt love and fear through the dangerous Egypt of this uncertain life, so as to enter joyfully the blessed land of promise, to enjoy never ending happiness, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Our Father, &c. Hail Mary, &c.

*The seventh Dolour.*

St. Joseph's looking for Jesus at twelve years of age, when returning from Jerusalem.

*The seventh Joy.*

His finding Jesus in the temple, sitting among the Doctors, who were astonished at his wisdom.

*The Prayer.*

**S**AINTE Joseph, my powerful Advocate, who in the losing and finding of Jesus, experienced the two extremes of intense anguish and transporting joy; I your unworthy suppliant most humbly petition, that I may never lose my God by mortal sin, although it were to enjoy as many pleasant worlds as Omnipotency can create. I now sincerely repent, and will lament during the remainder of my life, for having so frequently parted unconcerned with divine grace. I having nothing worthy of acceptance to atone for my crimes and pay off my debt, I offer the merits of my Redeemer, which he has made my own; and you glorious Foster-father of Jesus, offer for me all the aforesaid do-

lours and joys, that by worthy fruits of penance I may seek my Creator sorrowing, and after a happy death, adore him in the heavenly Jerusalem, there to enjoy what the heart of man has not conceived, through our Lord Jesus Christ, &c.

Our Father, &c. Hail Mary, &c.

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Eight MEDITATIONS upon  
some Passages of the Life of  
St. JOSEPH, which may serve  
through his Octave, or at  
other times.

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MEDITATION I.

*Of the Sanctification, Birth, and Name  
of Joseph.*

*The Preparatory Prayer.*

Beg humbly of God, that your memory, understanding and will, may be employed to his greater honour and glory, in this mental prayer.

*First Prelude.*

Imagine yourself at Nazareth, at the birth of St. Joseph, and ponder the difference wherewith men and blessed spirits regarded this Royal Infant.

*Second Prelude.*

Beg light to see the vanity of the world, and grace to despise it.

## POINT I.

Consider, **T**HAT St. Joseph was sanctified in his mother's womb. *Gerson, Serm. de nativ. Virg. habito in Concilio Constantensi. Et. 3. Part. Alphabet. 59. lib. 2. Officium Hierosolomit. Jacobus de Valentia super Magnificat*, being designed for a higher station than that of St. John Baptist, or the prophet Jeremy, who both were saints before their birth. Admire and love the purity of this holy infant. His soul was more charming by sanctified grace, than all the celebrated faces of the world. We may truly say, O beautiful St. Joseph! many rejoiced in your nativity, both angels and expecting souls in limbo, you being born,



who was to be the legal father to the long promised Messias, spoke to the Mother of God, governor of Jesus, and master of the sacred family, you appeared like a clear dawning of the day, ushering in the glorious sun of justice. I congratulate with you for your early sanctification, and I give thanks to my God for the prerogative designed you from all eternity. I take complacency that you are raised so high above other saints, and it will be a satisfaction if so insignificant a creature as myself can any ways promote your honour.

## POINT II.

*Consider,* **T**HIS noble infant was born in a poor little house, without such distinguishing marks of grandeur as are never wanting at the birth of princes. Reflect, that *as the heavens are far exalted above the earth, so are the thoughts of God different from those of men.* *Isaias* lv. Rebelling worms of the earth sit under the shade of triumphant laurels, although as vicious as bloody

Nero and savage Dioclesian, whilst Job the Idumean prince is scorned upon the dunghill, and Joseph the next heir to the sceptre of David is not taken notice of. After this manner the Almighty treats his chosen favourites. The *poor* rich man, who was cloathed in silks and purple, who feasted splendidly every day (St. Luke xvi.) sitting under a stately canopy, and adored by his flattering parasites, was so intoxicated with pride that he doated on his own misery: in that mistaken flourishing state he was odious to his Creator, contemptible to the angels, and notwithstanding his funeral pomp, the Son of God wrote his dreadful epitaph, *burned in hell!* whilst the *rich* poor man, fainting at his gate for want of the cast-away crumbs, and consoled by dogs licking his ulcers, was waited on by angels, to take his place among patriarchs, prophets, and kings. O the beauty and riches of holy poverty! O the dangerous circumstances of those who receive more temporal favours than others, which will render their

judgment more terrible for abused bounties. Lord open my eyes to see and contemn the frothy pomp of the world. Give me a sound judgment to undervalue myself. Create a clean heart in me, removing that which hitherto has been hardened, by the intercession of St. Joseph; correct my tepid and stupid thoughts, that I may pity and pray for unfortunate mortals, who look not forward to consider what it is to *be buried in hell*, from whence there is no redemption or return.

## POINT III.

Consider, **T**HE signification of the name of Joseph, viz. Increase. No sooner did he attain the use of perfect reason than he was inflamed with the love of God, and seeing St. Mary Magdalen de Pazzi, made a vow of perpetual virginity at ten years of age, probably our angelical patriarch offered this inestimable treasure at a more early period. He increased so fervorously in all manner of other heroic virtues, as to deserve

afterwards the second throne (as many doctors are of opinion) of all saved souls in heaven. Most holy God! I blush and am confounded in your pure presence, looking back on the black sins of my depraved youth. I own to have abused the first rays of reason, in turning into the broad way of the world: my first lessons were to study my satisfaction, to be esteemed, and I ran mad after the erring multitude. As I increased in years my crimes increased: now being sensible of all worldly folly, I penitently return. Receive me at the eleventh hour, you who had compassion on the good thief, when ready to expire upon the cross.

*The Colloquy.*

**B**LESSED St. Joseph, sanctified in your mother's womb, and born to the joy of men and angels, make powerful intercession for me, that my pious resolutions may not prove abortive; that I may be born to an interior and spiritual life; that I may have such an increase of sanctity, such an ardent love for purity, such abject

thoughts of my own vileness, so clear a light to view worldly greatness which is *vanity of vanities*, as to undervalue all things which deserve not the character of true wisdom and heavenly virtue, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

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## MEDITATION II.

### *Of the humble Calling of St. Joseph.*

The preparatory prayer as in the former meditation.

#### *First Prelude.*

Imagine yourself at Nazareth, beholding St. Joseph, a comely youth, exercising the laborious trade of a carpenter.

#### *Second Prelude.*

Beg of Almighty God to instruct you how in your present state of life you may attain true perfection.

#### POINT I.

*Consider,* **H**OW divine Providence ordered that St. Joseph of royal extraction should be trained:

up in the humble exercise of a carpenter. 1. Not only for his personal maintenance, but that this contemptible calling might balance the future dignities that were to be conferred upon him, and to resemble the humble life of the Messias. 2. That he might decline idleness, so dangerous to his vowed chastity. 3. That he might be a pattern to men living in the world, how they might be much in God's favour. 4. That by the labour of his hands he might be enabled to bestow the noblest charity in supporting the Son of God and his immaculate mother. My soul! upon all occasions rejoice in divine appointments, and take full notice that solid perfection is not confined to the solitary cells of Nitria. An unregarded artisan has taken place in glory of all the rigid Anchorets. Whoever serves his God more faithfully, and loves him more fervorously, than the silent recluse, will have a more resplendent crown. Rejoice that your Creator encourages and entertains impartially all his servants according to their merit, by co-



operation with his grace, congratulate with St. Joseph for being so great a favourite of heaven. Take a strict account of yourself how time is employed from morning to evening; ponder what is amiss, and resolve upon regulation, by the intercession of St. Joseph.

## POINT II.

*Consider.* **T**HAT amongst other motives determining St. Joseph to exercise this calling, was the love of humility and mortification. He had so clear a knowledge of God's greatness, that he thought he could not descend too low. O my soul! what different ideas have you of divine Majesty and divine Justice? You neither love your Creator as a father, nor fear your Redeemer as a judge. St. Joseph had little to satisfy for, but he would offer acts of supererogation, whilst I stand upon terms with God, stopping at strict obligation; and, alas! too often transgress against indispensable commandments. Reflect likewise on the false notion

of worldlings concerning mortification; who conclude, that voluntary sufferings appertain to such who have renounced the world, and live in convents, as if the sinner deserved not greater punishment than the saint. Ponder how often you have heinously injured God, whilst perhaps the mortified religious never lost baptismal grace. Take up the cross in time, mortify yourself to satisfy for past trespasses. Be liberal to God if you expect extraordinary lights and impulses. Be careful, by a guard over the senses, to preserve a pure interior. Beg, by St. Joseph's intercession, that you may not displease God venially, even by the cast of an eye or a disedifying jest.

### POINT III.

*Consider,* **H**OW St. Joseph's painful life was accompanied with purity of intention, directing all his thoughts and words, performing all his actions to the greater glory of God. This practice prepared him for the prerogatives, dis-

tinguishing him from other mortals. A right intention entitles to reward what in itself is indifferent, as being not commanded nor prohibited: it gives standard weight to the meanest of our actions, it advances a treasure to attend us at taking leave of the world, and is a sort of continual prayer. Lament the irrecoverable loss of many actions, not being meritorious, for the defect of pure intention. You never wanted vain and malicious intentions, obeying the suggestions of the infernal enemy. Desert him for the future, and whether you eat, drink, or sleep, make an offering, and tell Almighty God you comply with these necessities to please him. Take St. Joseph for your master, to teach you how to join exterior employments with interior intention and attention.

*The Colloquy.*

**O**mnipotent Creator! whose unerring providence adds joy every moment to the angels in heaven, and to saints upon earth, I most humbly beg by the intercession of St. Jo-

seph, that I may chearfully acquiesce and rejoice in every thing that comes from your fatherly hand. That I may be vigorous in executing your divine will, and glorify you in my present state. Grant me the true spirit of mortification, to subdue my stubborn passions, to satisfy for what is past, and to be a preservative from future dangers. Grant, that by purity of intention the meanest of my actions may be acceptable to you, as the two little mites were of the poor widow, thrown into the treasury of the temple. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, &c.

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### MEDITATION III.

#### *Of the Marriage of St. Joseph.*

The preparatory prayer as in the first meditation.

#### *First Prelude.*

Imagine yourself to be in the temple of Jerusalem, when the high-priest gave to Joseph the immaculate Vir-

gin Mary. How the Patriarch espoused her, by putting a ring upon her finger, with other ceremonies according to the written law, in token that he made her partaker of all his goods, and took her into his protection.

*Second Prelude.*

Beg light to understand the mysteries of this matrimony, and grace to reap fruit from hence.

POINT I.

Consider, **T**HOSE words of Solomon, *House and riches are given by parents, but properly a prudent wife is given by our Lord.* Prov. xix. 14. This feat of wisdom was so great a blessing to St. Joseph, that he might truly say, *all good things came with her.* Wisdom vii. 11. She brought a plentiful portion for his improving in all manner of virtues. Christ assisted personally at the marriage in *Cana of Galilee*, and we may contemplate what a blessing was bestowed on a mutual contract of her who was to become the *Mother of*

*God*, and him whom the second Person of the blessed Trinity was to obey. This was the most honourable marriage (ad Heb. xiii.) since the creation, and with a copious infusion of divine grace *God joined them*, St. Mat. xix. 16. Ponder likewise how the merits of St. Joseph promoted him to this dignity, *For a good spouse is given a man for his good actions*, Eccles. xxvi. 3. Study to please your Creator by purity of intention in choosing a state of life. Endeavour to be much in God's favour by good works. If you have faith to remove mountains, it avails nothing without charity. The devils believe and tremble; they made a profession that Christ was the *Son of God*, (St. Mat. viii.) yet remained damned spirits. Such as live not up to their belief, have *the faith of devils, not of apostles*, St. Aug. Serm. 38. de temp. Lament the sins and scandals of your former life. Resolve for the future, by the intercession of St. Joseph, that both God and man shall see your good works, and *glorify the Father in heaven*. Consi-



der also, that if it is your choice to live in a married state, you ought to cherish your consort, to preserve peace and union, to avoid contention and misunderstandings. As you make one civil body, like the primitive Christians, have *one heart and one soul*. Love your spouse *as Christ loved his Church*, (Ephes. v.) who for the love of it laid down his precious life. Beg blessings to your concerns by the intercession of St. Joseph.

## POINT II.

Consider, **A**Lmighty God was pleased to acquaint the world in these two noble persons, with the dignity of virginity, and value of vows. They both had consecrated their virginity to their Creator, and one was chosen to be the mother, the other legal father to the Son of God. O inestimable treasure of chastity, that renders mortal men like to angels. Unspotted virgins sing *canticles* before the throne of God peculiar to themselves. Apoc. xiv. 3. They attend the *omnipotent Son of God*

*wherever he goes.* The religious of both sexes, who profess and observe this evangelical counsel, may be called sons and daughters of Mary and Joseph. O virgin Mother, O virgin Spouse! beg and obtain for me chaste dispositions and desires. Ask yourself, whether edification and modesty appear in your conversation? If not, reform. Detest the company of such persons who even indirectly cast out words tending to levity. Fling aside or rather burn books which recount the successes of passionate love in creatures. Irregular suggestions pass from the memory to the understanding, and so to the will: remove the fuel to prevent the fire. Lament failings of what kind soever against this angelical virtue.

### POINT III.

*Consider,* **S**T. Joseph provided for the blessed Virgin, and took her into his protection. Do you also promote her honour with those under your charge. Suffer not any one to speak with disrespect of her, or

her glorious spouse. Avoid the conversation of those who lessen devotion to these great souls. Have a filial confidence in their protection, and congratulate with yourself for being so happy as to be devoted to them. Resolve to practise something to the honour of both. Do not be so grossly mistaken as to think eternal happiness must cost you nothing. Strip yourself of former fancies, and loathe what you hitherto have admired. Look up towards heaven, begin to overcome what you vainly feared: he is stronger who stretches out his hands to save you, than he that keeps you back in thralldom.

*The Colloquy.*

**O**Mnipotent God! at whose command every tree produced *fruit in its kind*, (Gen. i. 11.) grant me, by the intercession of this noble Virgin-maid, that I may serve you faithfully in the station you have placed me. I firmly believe every title you have revealed, yet help my incredulity, lest I be in the unfortunate number of foolish virgins who carried

*lamps without oil. Assist me with your powerful grace, that I may act as I profess; that I may be humble, charitable and chaste, and not stand like the barren fig-tree, and be fuel for eternal flames: through the infinite merits of Jesus my Saviour. Amen.*

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#### MEDITATION IV.

*Of St. Joseph's Journey with the blessed Virgin to visit St. Elizabeth.*

The preparatory prayer as in the former meditations.

*First Prelude.*

Imagine yourself accompanying the blessed Virgin and St. Joseph over craggy mountains, to a place distant far off from Nazareth. Hearken to their discourse in this winter journey, and consider what was said in the house of Zachary. Reflect on St. Joseph's perplexity at his return home.

*Second Prelude.*

Beg grace to be charitable to your neighbour, to shun detraction and rash

judgment, and to be devoted to the blessed Virgin.

POINT I.

*Consider,* **H**OW some months after St. Joseph's espousal, and a few days after the angel had declared to the blessed Virgin the mystery of the incarnation, and likewise that her cousin St. Elizabeth was six months gone with child, she humbly desired leave of St. Joseph to visit her; but he out of his tender affection would not suffer her to go, without his personally taking care of her in that journey. O admirable charity! O profound humility! take hold of all opportunities of comforting and succouring your neighbour. If you move in a higher sphere above others, reflect, that to whom much is given much will be required of him. Condescend to inferiors: the mother of God, prevented by a visit, the mother of the Precursor. Who is the blessed Virgin, and who am I? My pride is inexcusable. O my soul! study to be dead to all vanities, to beware of dia-

bolical illusions, suggesting such and such practices become men of honour. Lord give me your holy love, and I am happy enough to pity wicked monarchs, even the most flourishing ones of the universe.

## POINT II.

Consider, **T**HE many blessings that came by Mary. At her first salutation St. John was sanctified, he leaped for joy in his mother's womb. St. Elizabeth was replenished with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied, magnifying her maternity, calling her the *Blessed of women*, admiring her stupendous humility, that being *Mother of the Lord* she should come to her. O my tepid soul! learn to exult with joy at the receiving of thy Saviour in the holy eucharist; make due preparations, by a serious and sincere confession, humbly beg that the intercession of Mary may be a means to procure thy sanctification, for by her God distributes his favours. Represent to her thy necessities, and beg an alms of her. Reflect also,



that if such wonders happened at the first hearing the voice of the blessed Virgin, to what degree of sanctity must St. Joseph arrive, who conversed with her thirty years? If she obtains favours for notorious sinners, that by her prayers they return to the friendship of God, and are beautified with sanctifying grace, it is beyond our reach to comprehend what a fund of all virtues she procured for her dear St. Joseph. Contemplate how happy was the man *who had a good spouse*, (Eccles. xxvi. 1.), surpassing the excellency of the highest seraphim, and what a proficient he was in all perfection by her daily presence and heavenly discourse.

### POINT III.

Consider, **H**OW the sublime virtue of St. Joseph was tried, when after his stay at Zachary's house, at his return home, he understood that his immaculate spouse was with child. What sharp conflicts passed then betwixt a pure conscience and chaste affections? He put the

most favourable construction upon the occasion of his torturing affliction; he called to mind and revolved her unparalleled modesty and chastity, therefore would proceed cautiously, and not act with severity. He knew the long promised Messiah was to be born of a Virgin, and why might not she be that happy creature? Learn to excuse the seeming faults of others, and if an unbecoming action shews several faces, look upon the least deformed; excuse the intention, conclude it accidental, and fear you would have done worse in the like circumstances. Bewail all rashness in censuring your neighbour. Ponder also St. Joseph's zeal for the law of God, which he infinitely preferred, as the chief object of his love, above whatsoever was under heaven. My soul! despise what is transitory, standing in competition with divine precept, prefer not again the villain Barrabas before thy God. Yet the Patriarch resolved to *dismiss her privately*, that she might not suffer in her reputation, and be stoned as an adulteress. Be

you tender and compassionate in the failings of others; although they are matter of fact, prevent the spreading of them, give a check to such discourses. Consider likewise how the divine goodness afforded comfort when human means gave no relief. An angel is dispatched to acquaint him with the mystery, Oh what transcendant joy after piercing grief! Learn to expect the divine pleasure with settled resignation. Trust in the goodness of your God, accuse yourself of former diffidence. Congratulate with the blessed Virgin and St. Joseph for their mutual joy.

*The Colloquy.*

**H**OLY Ghost! my God of all comfort! if you see it expedient, for the greater security of my salvation, that I be tossed with tribulation, permit me not to sink. Infinite Power! bear me up, you know my weakness. Favour me with such graces, that I may be compassionate towards my neighbour, governing myself by the spirit of lenity and charity, as if the case were my own. I de-

plore my censorious temper, and I resolve to stand upon my guard. It is a mercy you have let me see my wickedness, I render you thanks for the desires of becoming better, and for not being worse than I am : but because of myself I am no more able to keep a good purpose than to remove a mountain, I beg your assistance that I may fulfil what you command, and then command what you please. Afflict me with such crosses as I can bear, to the end I may put off the great arrears due to divine justice. Grant me, by the intercession of St. Joseph, that after my temporal trials, whether exterior or interior, I may find that permanent joy with which you render his immaculate spouse and him eternally happy.

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### MEDITATION V.

*Of St. Joseph's Virtues exercised at the Birth, Circumcision, and Presentation of Jesus in the Temple.*

The preparatory prayer as in the former meditation.

*First Prelude.*

Imagine yourself with the blessed Virgin and St. Joseph in a ruinous stable at Bethlehem, where Christ was born, and laid in a manger betwixt an ox and an ass. How afterwards St. Joseph circumcised him and gave him the holy name of Jesus. Lastly, how he presented the Son of God in the temple, where he was met by Simeon and Anna.

*Second Prelude.*

Beg grace to profit by St. Joseph's contemplation in these mysteries.

## POINT I.

*Consider,* **H**OW St. Joseph being returned from Zachary's house, was obliged to undertake a winter journey, to be enrolled at Bethlehem with his spouse, in compliance to Augustus Cæsar's edict. He chearfully obeyed, so ought you to do towards those who have command over you, even in difficult matters. What pious discourses had he on the road for thirty miles with his virgin spouse; he patiently endured the inconveni-

encies in travelling, but many more at finding no place in the inn, and being forced to take shelter with an ox and an ass in a poor stable, to herd with brutes. How often have you entertained our Lord in the like manner, he entering a breast full of brutish passions, admire the patience of your Redeemer in suffering you to receive him so unworthily. The blind man knowing the king is present, stands with great respect, although he sees him not : you know that the Son of God visits you personally, yet remain stupid, as a senseless animal. Give frequent thanks to God that you have not been punished like Oza (2Kings6.) who was struck dead for rashness in touching only the ark of the covenant, whereas perhaps you have more than once received the Lord your God most sacrilegiously. Reflect on St. Joseph's sorrow, seeing the vileness of the place, no accommodation, at midnight, in a rigid season. The Son of God would be born in these severe circumstances, he chose what he loved. Be ye vile in your own



eyes, cut off superfluities by mortification. Beg that violent passions may freeze, that you may be a dwelling-place for Christ. The blessed Virgin and St. Joseph being wrapt in prayer and contemplation, *the immortal Son of God* was born according to the flesh. He wept upon the cold ground, and St. Joseph joined with him tears of fatherly tenderness; at every infancy, he sent heart-breaking sighs to heaven, and prostrate before him, honoured him with heroical acts of faith like his, who afterwards said, *Thou art Christ the Son of the living God*. He adored his Saviour, he thanked him for his immense goodness. Imitate you these and the like acts. Lament that your sins were the occasion of our Lord's weeping in the manger. Reflect what joy succeeded, when the crib resembled paradise. Choirs of angels sang *Glory to their God*, the shepherds adored, the three kings in an humble posture offered rich presents to their almighty Sovereign. Do you also join with the heavenly spirits, rendering thanks for innumera-

ble favours, which you may call to mind one by one. Offer your memory, understanding and will to him who gave you them. Beg by St. Joseph's intercession, that you may adore God upon earth with an undefiled conscience, and eternally in heaven in glory.

## POINT II.

*Consider,* **S**T. Joseph's obedience to the law, in circumcising his Saviour, who was exempt from it, yet would bear the badge of original sin, though incapable of committing any. You excuse yourself criminally from fulfilling of the divine law, and study to appear a saint, whilst you are an inveterate sinner, examine, repent, detest pride, the source of all evils. Jesus's humility confounds your haughtiness. Reflect how St. Joseph's heart was wounded with grief, before he saw the blood of Christ; at pronouncing the name of Jesus he fell upon his knees, the nine choirs of angels prostrated, and all hell trembled, that name being to confound

their insulting over captive souls. Offer tears of compunction to him, who redeemed you with streams of blood. Take not the name of the Lord your God in vain, which is *holy and terrible*, nor suffer any under your command to speak the language of devils. As far as lies in your power concur to the salvation of others. Since God descended from heaven to save sinful mankind, do you condescend to what may be instrumental in so glorious a work.

## POINT III.

Consider, **W**HAT St. Luke records, chap. 2. *His father (so the evangelist styles St. Joseph) and mother were marvelling at what was said of him.* They were in extasies, hearing the prophecies of Simeon and Anna. They marvelled, that *God so loved the world, as to give his only begotten Son.* They admired the infinite goodness of Christ, contemplating in him the boundless and bottomless ocean, as it were, become a drop, and the whole fiery sphere a little spark. They were astonished

that he who created the universe with a few *fiats*, was to be redeemed with a pair of turtles. They offered him to the eternal Father, and to complete this inestimable purchase, gave what was required by the law of Moses. My poor soul! join with them in admiration, marvel that Christ should love you, an ungrateful worm, so ardently as to weep for you, to bleed for you. Admire his divine patience in not punishing your manifold crimes, whereas many have been cut off in the flower of their youth, and sent to burn eternally in hell, for sins far less in number than yours. Stand confounded, reproach yourself, for having so frequently sold your Lord, like treacherous Judas, for petty interest or sordid passions; rejoice that he has ransomed you, and gives you grace to purchase his favour by leading a new life, resembling the simplicity of the dove.

*The Colloquy.*

**O** MY infant God! how truly may it be said of me, *the ox has known his owner, and the ass the man-*

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ger of his Lord, (Isa. 81.) but I have not known you. I admire your love and charity, I admire my tepidity and stupidity. Early goodness, I come too late to love you. Although at the eleventh hour, bestow on me the promised penny, be to me a Jesus, and you, who both fed me, and bled for my misfortunes, let me partake of the universal charity. Grant by the intercession of St. Joseph, that my purposes may be perfected by vigorous execution. I also beg, that when I entertain you in the most blessed sacrament, I may be favoured with such affections of adoration, love and thanksgiving, as St. Joseph experienced when he took you back into his arms from Simeon, to restore you to your blessed Mother. *Amen.*

## MEDITATION VI.

*Of the Flight into Egypt, his Return from thence, and of the losing of Jesus, and finding him in the Temple.*

The preparatory prayer, as in the former meditations.

*First Prelude.*

Imagine yourself travelling with that blessed company, in so tedious a journey, and a rigid season, Jesus not being *one year* old (Maldonatus in Math. & alii), reflect how they spent their time for several years, at Heliopolis, which is interpreted the *City of the Sun*. How after their return to Palestine, they went to adore in Jerusalem, where Jesus was lost, and found in the temple, sitting amongst the doctors.

*Second Prelude.*

Beg light, and grace to practice such virtues as St Joseph exercised both in Egypt and Judea.

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## POINT I.

Consider, **W**HEN St. Joseph received the command, *Arise, take the child and his mother, and fly into Egypt*, he obeyed that very moment. He quitted home, country, conveniences, to live amongst perverse idolaters, who hated the Hebrews. He travelled through deserts, wanting sometimes necessaries, passing from mountain to valley, to find a little spring to refresh the fainting family. The love of Jesus made all things easy to him. O my disobedient soul! how often has God commanded me by *clear* inspirations, *arise*, perform that act of virtue, *fly* that dangerous company, burn that pernicious book, make haste to the throne of mercy by serious repentance, and I slumbered on in my habitual tepidity, and slept in my iniquities? I will now *arise* with the *prodigal son*, I will make haste to my heavenly Father, loving him, grieving and confounding myself, and purposing newness of life, and surmounting with divine grace all

difficulties laid in the way, by men or devils. Ponder how it pierced St. Joseph's heart, to see his God offended by those prophane idolaters. You have so little compassion for other sinners, that you will not drop one tear for your own crimes. St. Joseph took pleasure to be despised as a vile artisan, working to support the sacred family. Your daily study is to be esteemed, you court vanity, and shun solid glory. My soul! bear up in hard usage, disown utterly the maxims of the world. Refuse not to be cloathed with contempt, like thy Lord and Master. Be not terrified with an imaginary enemy, and league with a real one.

POINT II.

*Consider,* **T**HE steadfast hope, and invincible fortitude of St. Joseph. His whole trust was in divine Providence. He gave no attention to diabolical suggestions, viz. Why to fly? Why so far off? Why at this season? Why into Egypt? Why not to the three kings? who

would take it as an honour to entertain us, but to a perverse nation, where we cannot expect any other treatment than affronts and ill usage. The holy Patriarch was deaf to this language, he chearfully arose at midnight, like the great Abraham, when commanded to sacrifice his son Isaac; nothing could deter him to move one step out of the road God had pointed for him. All the monsters of Egypt were looked on with disdain and contempt; *God was his hope*. Be not you curious to pry into the divine conduct, reject carnal arguments, dissuading from what the Almighty commands. Fix your eye on heaven, and as difficulties shew themselves let your hope increase. Beg by the intercession of St. Joseph, courage and resolution to quit all that is valuable upon earth, rather than disobey the voice of your Creator. Make reflect acts, that the *All-powerful is your hope*, who will send relief in due time, as he did to St. Joseph by an angel, ordering the return of the sacred family back again to Palestine.

## POINT III.

*Consider,* **T**HAT every man was obliged to go and worship God in the temple of Jerusalem, on the feast of Azims. It lasted seven days, and although St. Joseph might have made only his appearance, to fulfil the law, and return to Nazareth, yet he remained the seven days, taking that opportunity to satisfy his devotion by honouring the eternal Father in his own house. Endeavour you likewise to have interior fervour and recollection, as well as exterior reverence and modesty, at the time of divine service, and in private prayer. St. Joseph was apprehensive in coming back to Jewry, because Archelaus reigned there: now he fears not to appear in Jerusalem, where a cruel prince sat upon the throne, because the worship of God was concerned. Be you courageous in discharging your duty, despise human respects, and what the wicked world may say of you, by obeying God more than man. Consider also how Christ being lost,

St. Joseph sought him with a sorrowful heart; he could not find him amongst *his kindred and acquaintance*, nor in any other place but the temple. If ever you be so unfortunate as to lose our Lord by sin, lament bitterly, have recourse to prayer, turn from creatures, do not despond, avoid all occasions of relapsing, frequent the holy sacraments; for he is to be found in the temple. Reflect on the two-fold joy St. Joseph experienced at the sight of Jesus; the first, because he had found the God of his heart, whose profound wisdom was admired by the most learned doctors; the second, in hearing the blessed Virgin term him Jesus's Father, which prerogative was entertained with humility and confusion, as thinking himself unworthy of that glorious title. St. Joseph sought no esteem nor praises; that is my folly. I run after empty shadows of vanity, and decline real glory! My soul! glory in the cross of thy Lord Jesus Christ, and cause all the angels to rejoice at the return of the lost sheep, *that is*, thyself.

*The Colloquy.*

**J**ESUS, my Maker and Master! without whose merciful assistance I walk in darkness, and perish, I most humbly beg through the intercession of St. Joseph, that you will teach me the direct road from my Egyptian slavery, the servitude of sin, under which I have so long groaned, to the liberty of your faithful servants. I have frequently experienced your goodness, and I know your power; my trust is in both. O! grant me constancy to condemn the allurements of the world, and to stand undaunted at afflicted terrors. My dear Redeemer! I have too often lost you by sin, I have willingly and wilfully parted with you, for what I blush to think on. Pity the unfortunate, you who come to seek sinners, of whom I have been the ring-leader. You are now pleased to bless me with so true a sense of my former trespasses, that I grieve not so much for the fear of punishment, as for that my sins have offended you, the circle and centre



of all goodness. I steadfastly purpose by thy holy grace to seek you seriously by the reformation of my life, that I may find you in the heavenly Jerusalem, reigning with the Father and the Holy Ghost, world without end. *Amen.*

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## MEDITATION VII.

*Of St. Joseph's many Years Conversation with Jesus and Mary at Nazareth.*

The preparatory prayer as in the former meditations.

### *First Prelude.*

Imagine yourself to have had the happiness and honour of frequently entering the little house of Nazareth; and contemplate what probably was said or done by the sacred family.

### *Second Prelude.*

Beg light and grace to practise virtue, in imitation of St. Joseph, during the whole course of your life.

## POINT I.

Consider, **T**HOSE words of the royal prophet, *with a saint, you will become a saint*, Psalm xvii. 26. and contemplate how great a proficient in sanctity St. Joseph must have been by a daily and hourly conversation for thirty years, with the *Holy of Holies*, the *Son of God*. What he learned in Jesus's school, is not understood by the most elevated contemplatives. St. Paul, *rapt into paradise*, (2 Cor. xii. 4.) *heard words not lawful for a man to utter*. St. Joseph was made partaker of more divine secrets: and if the said apostle humbly gloried that *God made him a fit minister of the New Testament*, 2 Cor. iii. 6. it cannot be conceived how St. Joseph was qualified to discharge his duty as legal Father to the Word incarnate, and real spouse to the Mother of God. The long recollection of Paphnutius, and the mental prayers of Pacomius, are but rough draughts of our holy Patriarch's uninterrupted union with his Redeemer.

He had theological, cardinal, and other virtues in perfection under so great a master. Consider each apart, and single out something for imitation. Beg of St. Joseph, by the merits of Christ, and the love he bore to his immaculate Spouse, that he will be your intercessor and instructor towards learning the science of saints; reflect on St. Joseph's care and pains to support the family; all labour was sweet and easy, because undertaken for Jesus and Mary. If you have charge over others, promote God's honour, and permit not that he be offended: for, *whoever has not care of those under him, especially domestics, has denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.* 1 Tim. v. 8. If you connive at others sins, you make them your own, and although silent, you become an accomplice. Assist others in spiritual or temporal necessities, and you employ your time like St. Joseph working to please Jesus.

## POINT II.

*Consider,* **T**HE words of Solomon, Prov. vi. 27. *Can any man hide fire in his bosom, and his garment not to burn?* Could St. Joseph have the infant God in his arms so close to his heart, and not burn with divine love like the highest Seraphim? When the two disciples travelled towards Emmaus, and our blessed Saviour risen from the sepulchre, discoursed them upon the road, they found their *hearts burning within them, whilst he spoke to them in the way.* St. Luke xxiv. St. Joseph was thrice happy in such discourse for many years, the Son of God declared to him the interpretation of the scriptures, and necessity of suffering. When Christ fell upon his knees to pray, Joseph and Mary by his side, the Patriarch lost himself in extasies, he annihilated himself in the presence of God; how often did he tell him, my Lord! you know I love you, joy of my heart, God of my soul! whilst tears of devotion came

trickling down his face. Samuel mistook the voice of God, and took it for Heli's. Joseph had certainty in hearing the sweet voice of Christ, discoursing personally with him. O my soul! prepare the way for divine grace by fervent prayer, and according to your station, set others on fire with the love of God and their neighbour. Defer not the time of your devotions, as if you designed to serve your Creator in the last place, let him have preference to insignificant conversation, and trifling visits; ponder also, that probably according to the rules of perfection, St. Joseph distributed the hours of the day. Some he set out for prayer, some for pious conferences, others for work, and so the rest according to exigencies; observe you likewise order, give good example, which influences more than words. Mistake not the voice of the enemy transforming himself into an angel of light. Follow the instructions of a prudent director, who will inform you what is suggested by hell and self-love.

## POINT III.

Consider, **H**OW hard a matter it is, to find the true elevation of this resplendent star, St. Joseph. If bright rays darted out from Moses's face, after forty days and forty nights conversation with God on Mount Sinai (or as some doctors are of opinion, with an angel deputed by the Creator) insomuch that the princes of the synagogue, durst not draw near him, and the Law-giver placed a veil over his face, *Exod xxxiv. 33.* What a glorious interior had St. Joseph, who conversed with God made man, face to face, thirty years? St. Paul in his defence against the obstinate Jews, instanced how he was taught the law, at the feet of Gamaliel, *Acts xxii. 3.* St. Joseph learned the highest perfection of the law from him, who delivered it to Moses. In his daily actions he united the active and contemplative life, sometimes working for Jesus, at other times sitting at the feet of Jesus, and hearing the word.



He stood astonished to behold him, who commanded the world out of nothing with a few words, working at the carpenters trade, and expecting his orders. Admire the divine goodness, be enamoured with humility. Join ejaculatory prayers to common actions. Reflect, that as St. Joseph nourished Christ corporally, so Jesus nourished his Foster-father spiritually, who improved in all virtues, and became a most accomplished saint.

*The Colloquy.*

**O**Mnipotent God! who *descendest from heaven to bring fire to the earth*, (St. Luke xii.) inflame my frozen heart, that I may imitate the virtues of St. Joseph. As a poor wretch waits at the gate of some noble and generous prince, expecting an alms, so I appear before you, wounded in all my senses by sin, and craving a charity in my great calamity. I grieve for what is past, not because I fear, but because I love; nothing has succeeded with me, be-

cause I never consulted you. I made you a stranger to all my affairs, and represented them to others, who could not afford any relief. I beg, by the intercession of St. Joseph, that I may decline evil, and do good; that I may leave the sinful track of the broad way, and walk directly towards you. That I may distribute the few remaining hours of my short life, to your honour, and attaining the end for which I was created; that I may admire, praise, and love you, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

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### MEDITATION VIII.

#### *Of St. Joseph's happy Departure.*

The preparatory prayer as in the former meditations.

#### *First Prelude.*

Imagine to see St. Joseph upon his death-bed, our blessed Saviour and his mother kneeling on each side. How he sweetly rendered his

soul to God, was conducted by angels to Limbo, and his body decently interred.

*Second Prelude.*

Beg grace to lead such a life, as to be favoured on your death-bed, by the protection of Jesus, and the special intercession of Mary and Joseph.

POINT I.

*Consider,* **T**HAT before the nuptial feast of Cana in Galilee, St. Joseph was visited with his final sickness. *St. Epiphan. Hær. 78. Franciscus Locus. Baron.* He then exercised, as he had done through the whole course of his life, seraphical acts of divine love, and heroic acts of patience and resignation, which the Son of God suggested to him. O what a heavenly scene was it, to behold the second Person of the most blessed Trinity, kneeling on one side of his bed, and the mother of his Redeemer on the other? Both tenderly thanked him for the constant care and pains, undertaken so many

years upon their account. St. Joseph with tears of joy returned humble thanks for the honour they had done him, by acknowledging the discharge of his duty, and for their affection towards him. He begged, as the last favour in this world, a blessing from Christ's hand, that fills every creature with benediction, and likewise the powerful intercession of his immaculate Spouse, for a happy passage to eternity; which being granted with grateful tears, he petitioned, like old Simeon, to be dismissed in peace, and wrapt into an extasy with the love of God, he breathed out his precious soul. Thrice happy death, the reward of a virtuous life. My God! let my departure be like that of the just. Infinite goodness! infinite power! assist me now, and at the dreadful trial. Let me not be confounded at the hour of death. Ponder also how Jesus with his sacred hands, closed the Patriarch's eyes. To deserve a happy death, shut now your eyes to the world, make such timely preparations, as you would wish to have

done, when struggling in your agony. Insult over hell by a change of life, send up aspirations, desiring to be dissolved and to be with Christ. Be exact in every confession, as if it were the last. Do not sleep in mortal sin, lest sudden death seize you, and you be lost eternally. Address St. Joseph, that you may have the benediction of Jesus on your death-bed, and rejoice with thoughts of being called out of banishment.

## POINT II.

Consider, **T**HAT if angels carried the soul of poor Lazarus into Abraham's bosom, a noble choir of those blessed spirits were commanded to conduct and wait on St. Joseph's to Limbo. At his coming thither, they might make use of the high-priest Joachim's words to conquering Judith, and sing, *here enters the glory of Jerusalem, the joy of Israel, and the honour of your people.* This is the soul of great St. Joseph, who governed and supported

your Creator thirty years, who was spouse to the mother of God. Reflect how the saved souls of kings, patriarchs and prophets, rejoiced at his entrance, but much more, when he gave an agreeable relation of the birth and life of the long expected Messiah, and that their redemption was near at hand. O my soul! languish for that happy hour, when thy good angel will conduct thee to hear the transporting invitation, *enter into the joy of thy Lord*. Obey the angels voice, exciting you to acts of faith, hope, love of God, contrition and resignation, that they may be familiar to you on your death-bed. Reflect on your former sins, that if you had been called away at such and such a time, you had now been burning with Cain and Judas. Give thanks for your preservation; resolve rather to dismiss all that is dear to you in the world, than divine grace. Consider likewise how our blessed Saviour and the immaculate Virgin, waited on St. Joseph's corpse to the place of interment, (*Barradius, lib. 6. c. 8.*),



which was the valley of Josophat, near the place where afterwards the blessed Virgin's body was deposited for some days, betwixt Mount Sion and Mount Olivet, (*Ven. Beda, Bruchardus*), and since the bodies of several saints have been preserved from corruption, it is no rash thought to be of opinion, that our holy Patriarch was favoured after the like manner. O precious reliques! O what an honour, that God in person should take care of the funeral, and with his sacred hands place the body in the sepulchre. Admire the dignity of St. Joseph. Carry about your reliques, which terrify devils, and keep them at distance. Detest novelty, shun the dangerous company of those who cast out words, reflecting on any practice of the present Church of Christ. Live so that you may appear with security and joy, in the valley of Josophat, when Christ comes to judge the world.

## POINT III.

Consider, **H**OW Christ our Lord, rising from his sepulchre, visited his expecting servants in Limbo. He took them from thence, as trophies of his bitter passion, and whereas *many bodies of saints arose that had slept*, (St. Mat. xxvii. 52.), we may not doubt of St. Joseph's being of that happy number, for it is piously believed (*St. Bernardin, tom. 3. Serm. de St. Joseph, Gerson, &c.*) that St. Joseph is both soul and body glorious in heaven, although these of others arising at that time might return to their tombs. The Son of God and the holy Patriarch went to visit the dolorous Mother. O what comfort! what a torrent of joy overflowed the blessed Virgin's heart, at that glorious apparition of her immortal Son and dear Spouse. As grief abounded before, so did then consolation. Die with Christ by mortification, that you may rise with him to a new life. Renounce present pleasures, that you may rejoice for

ever. Break through all difficulties to open the way out of your loathsome tomb of vice, where you have lain so long and so sordidly. Ponder also, that according to the opinion of many sound doctors, St. Joseph is the most eminent saint in heaven \* next to the blessed Virgin, and how on the ascension-day, our Lord carried up in triumph his Foster-father, both body and soul, and placed him on a glorious throne, next to that prepared for the Mother of God. What joy did he then experience for past sufferings? what glory for contempt? what a resplendent crown for purity of life? O my sluggish soul! take pains like St. Joseph in serving Christ, that you may be rewarded with him; call frequently to mind those divine words of our Redeemer, *what doth it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and sustains the damage of his*

\* Suarez, p. 3. tom. 2. Gerson, Serm. de Nativ. Conf. 4. Bernardin, 4. Part, Serm. 12. Cartagene, tom. 1. lib. 4. Hom. 1 & 9. Isidor. 4. Part, cap. 2. Segn. Serm. de S. Joseph. & alii.

*soul*, St. Mat. xvi.; the enjoyment is short, and the punishment eternal. On the contrary, faithful servants of the Omnipotent, have transient trials, short afflictions, whether exterior or interior, but they gain a never ending and happy kingdom. Say often to yourself, what can separate me from the love of my God? Not all the menaces of cruel men, nor all the malice of hell. I will love my omnipotent Creator, I will love my most merciful Redeemer, I will love my gracious Sanctifier, purely for their own sakes, I will love them eternally.

*The Colloquy.*

O Most glorious Patriarch, my dear Patron! *Blessed are the eyes that see, what you now see.* I confide with holy Job, through the infinite merits of Christ, and by your powerful intercession, that *in my flesh I shall see God my Saviour.* Stretch out, for your unworthy client, those happy hands, which carried so often, and provided for the Son of God. Peti-

tion that I may live, as I wish to die, always in the divine favour. I most humbly beg that you will prevail with your immaculate Spouse, to join in prayer with you, that I, her unworthy suppliant, may be a saved soul, and make one of the number of the elect. With profound humility, I invite you both to be present with me at the dreadful hour of my death, when my last grateful words shall be, with my parting breath, to invoke the sacred names of Jesus, Mary, Joseph; and having satisfied divine justice for manifold transgressions in the scorching flames of purgatory, the very moment that I shall be admitted to the beatifical vision, I will prostrate myself before the throne of mercy, and will say; O my God! your charity was infinite, and your goodness incomprehensible, to bring into this celestial mansion, a vile worm of the earth. I deserved to have been now raging with reprobate souls in unquenchable fire, and not to be an eye-witness of so great glory, but your mercy is above all your works. Most sacred

Trinity! my present happiness is most dear unto me, because this transporting felicity was perfected by your bountiful grace and favour, more than by my poor merits co-operating, to take possession of heaven. I will then address the Mother of God, and you her glorious Spouse, as also the nine choirs of angels, and all blessed souls, to join with me in acts of thanksgiving, to God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, and for ever and ever. *Amen.*



*FINIS.*



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Trinity! my present happiness is most dear unto me, because this transporting felicity was perfected by your bountiful grace and favour, more than by my poor merits co-operating, to take possession of heaven. I will then address the Mother of God, and you her glorious Spouse, as also the nine choirs of angels, and all blessed souls, to join with me in acts of thanksgiving, to God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, and for ever and ever. *Amen.*



*FINIS.*

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